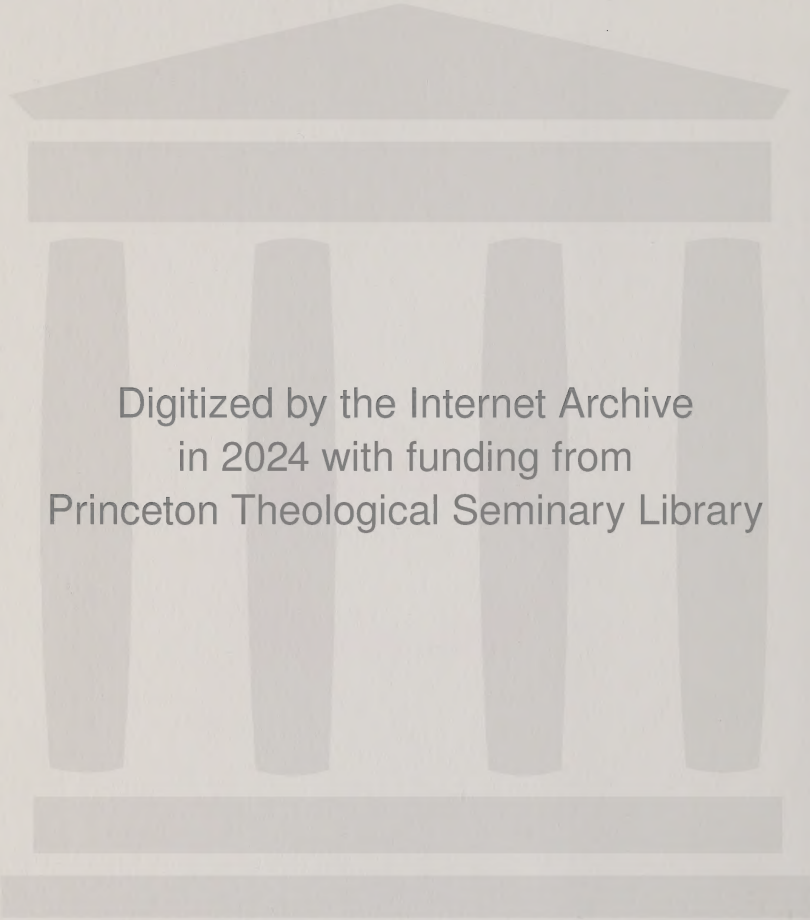


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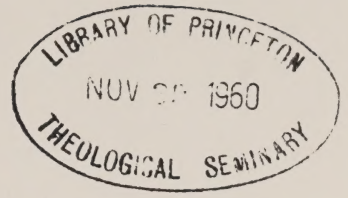


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THE STORY
OF
THE NATIONAL BAPTISTS

*The Story
of
The National Baptists*



by
REVEREND OWEN D. PELT
Historiographer of the
NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, U.S.A., INC.
and
RALPH LEE SMITH



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FOREWORD

by

Dr. James R. Buck

President

Natchez College, Natchez, Miss.

In 1960, the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., was eighty years old.

We have achieved things that were only dreams to the pioneers who founded the Convention in 1880. And in many ways the world itself has changed almost beyond recognition.

But one thing has not changed.

The founders were struggling with the problem of how to make their faith a strong, living force in a world of difficulties, danger, and spiritual need. If the day comes when men and women no longer care about this problem, religion will become an empty ceremony in our lives.

Today, our society and our world are being transformed by great discoveries and by the competition of ideas. People often wonder about the role of vital religion in the days ahead. It is good that they wonder; it brings them close to religious men and women everywhere.

To many Baptists of our Convention, it seems a good time to take stock. One thing is certain: we need to *know* the treasures of the past if we are going to win the victories that must be won today and tomorrow.

The Reverend Owen D. Pelt, the Convention's Historiographer, and Ralph Lee Smith, one of the nation's leading maga-

zine writers, have studied the Convention's records, and have put the real treasure between the covers of an informal, readable book that every member of the Church can own and use. They have avoided dates and details, and instead have told the story of our major achievements, and of the great men and women who built our priceless heritage for us.

Here is rich reading, both for those who already know the outlines of our history and for those who will meet the Church's finest spirits and finest deeds in these pages for the first time.

This is "our treasure"—our common possession from which we can draw strength and faith for the future.

CONTENTS

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
Foreword by Dr. James R. Buck	
I The Light That Shines in the Heart	9
II Striking Roots Among Negroes	21
III The Heroic Age	34
IV The Tragic Road to Freedom	59
V The Rising Star—Birth of the Convention	79
VI Some Growing Pains	97
VII A Great Free Press—The New Publishing Board . .	110
VIII America's Greatest "Operation Bootstrap"	127
IX Reaching Around the World	149
X The Convention Today and Tomorrow	165 ~
XI The Member and His Church	180
Appendices	191

CHAPTER I

The Light That Shines in the Heart

What is a Baptist?

Many a devoted Church member, if suddenly asked that question, might find it hard to answer.

Or he might think of many answers—and feel that there is something wrong with all of them.

For example, he might think of some of the formal beliefs that you will find in the excellent list at the end of this book. And, of course, it is true that several simple and important beliefs lie at the heart of every Baptist's faith. But it is also true that the real answer to such a question is hard to find in a list.

If he were a member of the National Baptist Convention, Inc., he might think of the beautiful churches, the publishing house, the great work of his Church's foreign missions throughout the world, the rapid rise and progress of his denomination—but none of these things explain the *spirit* that brought all these things into being. The mystery would remain.

Is there a *real* answer, and is there any path to finding it?

There *is* a real answer, and there is such a path.

As our first step down the path, let us take an imaginary trip. This is a trip in space—and a trip in time. We are going to a town called Strasbourg, in Germany. The modern world drops away—we are going back three and a half centuries.

Finally the whirl of time stops. We find ourselves in a quaint city with narrow streets and red-tile roofs, at the foot of great, forest-covered hills. By our modern standards it

is a small city indeed, and it looks like a scene from a picture postcard.

It is a beautiful summer day. The year: 1526.

Small as it may seem to us, Strasbourg was actually a very important city in 1526. Its university and its churches were famous. And on the day of our visit something especially important seems to be happening. There is an air of suspense and excitement, and the townspeople are talking about "the preacher" and the "city council."

The people know that what is taking place is important. But they do not know that people will remember it—and be influenced by it—for centuries to come.

"There's a public meeting in the Guild Hall," someone says. "Hans Denck has to defend himself before the elders of the city."

In the magnificent, flag-draped Guild Hall, a hushed crowd is watching. The members of the City Council and some of the city's leading ministers are sitting at a table in the front. To their left stands the handsome, thirty-year-old preacher whose ideas have been causing such a stir.

"Mr. Denck," said one of the ministers, "what are your views on baptism?"

"It is meaningless to baptize infants," the young man replied. "How can an infant perform a voluntary act of faith? We shouldn't build our churches and our faith on ceremonies that have no personal meaning for the people involved."

"Do you believe in adult baptism?" asked another.

"Yes," said Denck, "I do. To baptize an adult is to bring into the church a man who is making a voluntary act of faith, freely, because he *wants* to. It's the difference between an act that means nothing, and an act that symbolizes a fellowship of real believers."

"Do you believe it is God's will that people are free to make such choices themselves?" asked a minister.

"God has made all of us free," said Denck. "How could a God of Love force anyone to believe in him? And how could a God of Love turn away a man who has searched his heart and *wants* to believe?"

There was a moment of silence.

"Do you think that the state has the power to enforce religious views?" asked a magistrate.

"The sword is not God's weapon," Denck replied, "and it is not His will that we should use it on each other in disputes over His Word."

"The state cannot intervene in a religious controversy—even to help the right side?" asked another.

"The state and the church must be separate," said Denck. "Free men will find and follow the truth. No man can be forced to have faith."

"Reverend Denck," said a member of the City Council, "We take pride in the freedom of our city, and the many views that we allow people to hold. But everything you say is directly contrary to the teachings of Luther and the great new reform. Luther holds that we do *not* have free will. He believes that the state must intervene in religious conflicts. And in Switzerland the reformers insist that some are saved and some are condemned by the will of God, not by an act of faith on the part of individual people. Luther and the Swiss Reformers believe in infant baptism, and they say that your views make no sense."

The speaker paused, then said, "We must now ask you to leave this hall. You will know our decision in a few days."

The verdict was not long forthcoming. Hans Denck was banished!

In Strasbourg he had been preaching to large congrega-

tions, and his ideas had caused much discussion among the people. Extremely handsome, with great personal charm and modesty, and as moderate in expressing his views as he was courageous in holding them, Denck had made a deep impression on the city and caused great alarm to the authorities.

It seems strange to us today that views as simple and as sensible as those of Denck should have been considered so dangerous. But he lived at the very dawn of the Reformation, when religious controversy was as savage as it has ever been in human history, and when a man's beliefs were quite literally a matter of life and death.

When Hans Denck was banished from Strasbourg, the Protestant Reformation was only nine years old. In 1517, Luther had shaken Europe to its foundations with his ninety-five "theses," which he nailed to the door of the church at Wittenberg. These theses challenged the infallibility of Catholic faith and practice, and condemned the spiritual bankruptcy of the Catholic Church as it then existed.

Luther's defiance won him immediate support. Many people were thrilled by his courage, and by his flat statement that man was free to challenge religious dogmas and abuses.

Unfortunately, it soon became clear that there was an inconsistency in Luther's ideas that was a source of great conflict and tragedy. He had asserted man's freedom to challenge the ideas of the Catholic Church. But he increasingly denied the freedom of man to challenge the ideas of Luther.

At the same time, he had let loose on the continent of Europe an idea of religious freedom that soon felt itself just as able to question Luther as Catholicism.

Conflict was inevitable. And it soon came.

Various small groups of reformers balked at Luther's approach, although they approved of the Reformation. They saw that Luther was really substituting a new dogma for an

old one, instead of replacing the concept of religious authority with the *new concept* of personal freedom.

Their challenge to Luther became centered on the problem of baptism. Reading their scriptures, they realized that there is no scriptural authorization for the practice of infant baptism. If Luther *really* wanted to substitute a religion of the Bible for a religion of meaningless ceremony, said these people, then he should renounce baptism of infants.

Instead of infant baptism, these reformers called for baptism of adults. This ceremony, they said, would *mean* something. An adult can make an intelligent act of faith. He can voluntarily announce his belief. A church of adult Baptists, therefore, would be a freely formed association of real believers—believers by personal choice.

These teachings and ideas angered Luther, and his position became increasingly rigid. He questioned whether anyone had the free will to make such decisions for himself and to form such associations. This was an odd position for the man who had assumed without question his own right to make free decisions about the Catholic Church. He never recognized the inconsistency of his view.

Luther and his followers dubbed the new reformers “Anabaptists,” meaning “re-baptists.” It was meant as a term of derision, but history has changed it into a badge of high honor.

Luther published a book, *The Unfree Will*, to bolster his position. He urged the civil authorities of German cities to pass judgment on the strange new religious views.

Hans Denck was an early Anabaptist. We actually have few details of his life except for his greatest hours. He was probably born in Bavaria, about 1495. His early years are lost to us.

Records show that he received a degree from the University of Ingolstadt in 1517, and during the next five years we

catch glimpses of him in close company with leading humanists and religious reformers. He eagerly welcomed the new Lutheranism and at first found high favor with its leaders. He was appointed Director of Saint Sebald's School in Nuremberg, a city that had early declared itself for Luther. He was a brilliant scholar and preacher, and his future with the orthodox reform party was assured.

But in Nuremberg Denck met the new Anabaptists and was convinced by their teachings. His integrity required him to declare himself on their side, and to preach openly to great congregations the ideas of free spiritual religion, personal declaration of faith, and adult baptism.

His candor turned his life into one of personal tragedy, but enrolled him forever in the pages of human history.

The alarmed Nuremberg authorities asked him to write out an account of his views, for consideration and judgment. He filed his confession of Anabaptist beliefs. "God compels nobody," he said, "because He will have no one saved by compulsion. God has given free will to men that they may choose for themselves either the good or the evil. God's service is a thing of complete freedom."

Declaring himself against ceremonies as a way of finding God, he said, "He who does not know God from God Himself does not ever know Him."

His fearless statement caused Nuremberg to banish him. He had sacrificed his career and his security for his beliefs, but he maintained more strongly than ever that the Gospel should be treated as the direct source of religion, and that the true church was a voluntary community of believers with adult baptism as its sign.

Persecution caused Denck and the other early Baptists to add another basic tenet to their faith—that no state and no

civil magistrate had the power to persecute any human being for his faith. The Gospel, said Denck, gives them no such authority, since its commandment is Love.

From Nuremberg he went to Augsburg, an Anabaptist stronghold. He then moved on to Strasbourg, where he preached the new message with great effect, converting a large number of the people to his views. As we have seen, however, he was soon in trouble again, and again he found himself banished.

His life was now seriously threatened. The Lutheran Reformers were urging stronger measures, and he was not safe in any city. He became a homeless wanderer, seeking brief refuge in towns and cities throughout Germany and in Switzerland. It is perhaps merciful that in 1527, at the age of thirty-two, he fell ill of the plague while he was in Basel, Switzerland, and died. Within ten years after his death thousands of Anabaptists had been hunted down like animals and slaughtered. All the leaders of the movement perished in one of the most tragic chapters in the world's religious history. The movement was completely crushed, with Catholics and Protestant Reformers collaborating in the destruction. A certain number of extremists found shelter in the Anabaptist cause and this hastened its destruction.

But the Anabaptists had made a permanent contribution to the world's spiritual history. Their ideas seem strikingly modern to us by comparison with the grim inflexibility of Luther. Their writings, although suppressed, survived in sufficient quantity to have an incalculable influence.

As the Reformation progressed, increasing measures of religious freedom were granted in Holland and England. There the seed sown by the Anabaptists sprung up anew. Hans Denck died in 1527; before another century elapsed, churches that

placed adult baptism at the heart of their tenets were being established in both countries. By 1625, certain churches in England were calling themselves "Baptist" churches.

It is also of interest that America's first Baptist was born less than a century after the death of Hans Denck. His religious views corresponded closely to those of many of the Anabaptists, and his ideas of religious freedom have become a priceless part of the American heritage. He was Roger Williams, founder of Rhode Island.

Roger Williams, who was truly one of America's greatest men, has almost assumed the status of a myth. This is a tribute to his prestige in the hearts of his countrymen, for whom he did so much—but it also tends to obscure the real human being who did the great deeds.

Roger Williams and Hans Denck, who both devoted their lives to the cause of human spiritual freedom, were very different types of people. Even Denck's enemies testified to his tremendous personal warmth and kindness, his genius for replying temperately and moderately to savage attacks, and the general saintliness of his character and personality. By contrast, Williams was a stormy petrel. His genius was more for stirring up controversy than for moderating differences. If he was attacked, he gave his foes two hard blows for every one he received. Denck, we might say, was an easy man to deal with; Williams was a very tough man to deal with. These two men, so dissimilar that they might have found it hard to carry on an ordinary conversation, nevertheless shared two things—a keen insight into the real issues of spiritual religion, and a willingness to sacrifice everything for their beliefs if it were necessary.

Roger Williams was born in London, in 1603. His father was a small tradesman of very modest means. but through some lucky contacts Williams was able to go to Cambridge

University. He studied theology and was duly ordained a minister in the Anglican Church of England.

He promptly rebelled at the ceremonies and rigid authority of the Church, however, and became attracted to the new Puritanism that was rising in England, which he found to be more solidly based on the Scriptures.

He made no secret of his rejection of England's official religion, and his position soon became very difficult. He decided to emigrate to New England.

He arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, on February 5, 1631, and stirred up a controversy almost the moment he put his foot on dry ground. He refused to join the church at Boston because it had not made a public declaration of repentance for once having been associated with the Church of England.

Now, as a practical matter, the Boston Church had no connections of any kind with the English Anglican Church. But it feared it might stir up a hornet's nest by making such a public declaration, because it might have caused English authorities to try to supervise and limit the freedoms of the new churches in America.

We are entitled to look on Williams's position as being a little stiff-necked, but nevertheless we have to recognize that this same iron, inflexible will was to carry him safely through the drama that lay ahead.

Williams became pastor of a tiny church at Salem, and in no time was in trouble again. He fought with the civil authorities over their assumption of the power to punish people for religious deviations such as breaking the Sabbath. Here we can sympathize strongly with him in his bold assertion that religion was none of the state's business. But in early New England religion *was* the state's business in the eyes of most of the settlers. Williams lost the argument and lost his pastorate.

He then went to Plymouth and established friendly relationships with the local Indians, mastering their language. In 1633, he was back in Salem again, and also back in trouble. This time the issues were of majestic importance.

Williams openly repudiated the validity of the Massachusetts Bay Colony Charter, because it had taken land from the Indians without compensation, and because it imposed a uniform religious faith and worship on the colonists.

He had taken his first important step into world history. Justice and absolute freedom of religious conscience were the rocks on which he stood.

He was tried by the Massachusetts General Court, in 1635, and banished from the colony.

The authorities planned to deport him to England. However, in January, 1636, he eluded them, and, with a few faithful friends and followers, made his way into the snow and wilderness to the shore of Narragansett Bay. There he purchased land from the local Indians and founded a settlement that he named Providence, "in gratitude to God's merciful Providence."

Williams and his fellow settlers proclaimed freedom of religion throughout their new domain and invited the persecuted and oppressed to come.

Meanwhile, Williams's own religious views had been troubling him. He found New England Puritanism as authoritarian as the Church of England. He knew of the teachings of the Anabaptist and the new English Baptist churches, which sought a religion based directly on Scripture, a church of believers based on personal declaration of faith, religious toleration, and separation of Church and state.

In 1639, Roger Williams made his choice. He had himself baptized by a layman, whom he baptized in turn. He then baptized ten others, and the group formed the first Baptist

church on American soil. The First Baptist Church of Providence, Rhode Island, is the lineal descendant of the church founded by Roger Williams.

In 1644, Williams obtained a Royal Charter for his colony. He devoted many years to creating a democratic government, building Indian relations, and molding his colony as a true haven of religious freedom.

In later years he doubted the propriety of his lay baptism and was not sure that he could properly consider himself a member of the Baptist Church of regenerate believers. But to the end of his life he believed that the Baptist Church was the nearest to genuine Apostolic religion, and the truest embodiment of his own views of the spiritual freedom of all men.

This close tie of the Baptist faith with America's earliest efforts toward full freedom of conscience is as interesting as it is natural. Freedom of the individual and voluntary association of believers were the basic tenets of the early Baptists. They are among the greatest contributions ever made to the spiritual progress of man.

Few Baptists realize that these contributions are a part of the unique heritage of their own religion, and few realize that the Baptist faith was the first of the reformed faiths to assert the principle of freedom of religious conscience.

Few realize, too, how closely the history of their own religion is associated with the early history of American freedom.

This brings us closer to an answer to the question: "What is a Baptist?" A Baptist is a man or woman who believes that personal freedom lies at the heart of true religion. "We are free"—that is what Hans Denck told the magistrates of Nuremberg and Strasbourg, and that is what Roger Williams told the General Court of Massachusetts.

A Church, said these early Baptists, is an association of the

➤ regenerate, which can be possible only through adult, rather than infant, baptism. It is based on the Bible, not on ceremony or on competing systems of dogma. It is separate from the state and no man can be coerced to join it.

This is the light that shone in the heart of the men who created the Baptist faith. It is the same light that guides the Baptist faith today.

CHAPTER II

Striking Roots Among Negroes

Can slavery be justified? And is slavery consistent with Christian teachings?

These questions were important ones for America almost from the beginning of its Colonial history. The attitudes taken by different people and different groups on these questions had a great influence on the early religious history of American Negroes.

To begin with, it is interesting to note how old "the slavery question" is.

The earliest records of the civilizations of Egypt and Sumeria, which carry us back several thousand years before Christ, strongly suggest that these civilizations had already established the institution of slavery. And, odd as it may seem, we can actually regard this as a proof of their superior civilization. In more primitive times the idea of sparing your vanquished enemy's life and turning him into your servant did not occur to anyone. The losers in armed conflict were simply killed.

As civilization advanced, it became clear that there were economic advantages in sparing your enemy's life. This was the beginning of slavery.

The Egyptians and the civilizations of the Ancient Near East never asked the question, "Is slavery wrong?" The Greeks were the first to think about that question, just as they were the first to think about so many other problems of human life.

With their clear and logical minds, it did not take the Greeks long to perceive that many slaves were as good as their masters—or better. But during its period of classical greatness, Greek civilization was never able to face this problem squarely.

Aristotle suggested that some people were naturally born to be slaves, and there was nothing wrong with enslaving such people. Along with most of his fellow Greeks, he thought that if one was not a Greek one was simply a barbarian. He suggested a rule of thumb—Greeks should not enslave other Greeks, but enslavement of non-Greeks was perfectly all right!

Such answers to the question, of course, did not satisfy mankind for very long, but the Greeks deserve eternal credit for being the first to give any serious thought to the ethical problem of slavery.

During the Roman era, thinking on the problem became a lot more challenging. Early Christians and late pagan schools of philosophy such as the Stoics agreed that all men are brothers. Slavery continued, but its ethical foundations had been destroyed forever, and its disappearance from human life was only a question of time.

It is interesting to note that during the Middle Ages there was apparently very little racial antagonism against Negroes. In fact, a Negro was regarded with respect and even a little awe. A number of medieval paintings of the Nativity show one of the Three Wise Men as being a Negro king.

Aristotle's old idea that a Greek should not enslave a Greek took on a new twist in Christian Europe. It was generally agreed that a Christian should not enslave a Christian!

— This idea never became an official doctrine of any Christian church, but nevertheless it took root, and had a deep effect on the early religious training of American Negro slaves.

Negro domestic slaves and Negro agricultural laborers

were introduced into America at an early date. Ministers and churches almost immediately raised the question of bringing the Christian message to these Negroes.

Once again the ancient ethical issue was raised. People of good will wanted their slaves to learn the message of Christ. Yet, at the heart of Christ's message lies the idea that all men are equal in the sight of God!

People were afraid of exposing slaves to ideas like this. It would not take an intelligent slave long to realize that there was a serious inconsistency between the white man's actions and his religion. And the idea of the equality of all men, once it is set afoot, cannot be stopped from spreading.

Some people offered a simple solution. Negroes, they said, did not have souls, and therefore they did not need religious education!

This idea, of course, was far too crude to carry any weight among thinking persons.

Other people took an entirely practical view. It was true, they said, that Christians should not enslave Christians. The solution was therefore easy: do not permit Negroes to become Christians!

This idea was of course unacceptable to most sincerely religious persons, but it did represent the genuine fear in the hearts of many slave owners. They recognized the simple truth—that the authentic Christian message was ultimately subversive of the institution of slavery. The best thing to do, they felt, was to keep Negro slaves ignorant of Christianity.

Faced with this dilemma, some slave owners took one course and some took another. Some strictly forbade the preaching of the Gospel to their slaves. Others permitted it but had grave misgivings. Still others felt a genuine concern for the spiritual well-being of their slaves, and encouraged ministers to come and provide Christian instruction.

Therefore the earliest contacts of the American Negro with Christianity depended greatly on how his master felt about the conflicts and dilemmas involved in bringing the message of Christian truth to enslaved people.

During the seventeenth century in the American colonies, the Quakers in Pennsylvania led the way in championing the religious education of both Negroes and Indians. With the dawn of the eighteenth century, a new evangelism arose in both England and the colonies, and many denominations became deeply interested in the problem of Negro religious education.

For example, in 1707 the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was founded in London, with a special interest in working with Indians and Negroes. Ministers in the colonies who were associated with this group began to approach slave owners for permission to teach the Christian religion to their slaves. Some owners assented.

In 1705, the Reverend Samuel Thomas, of Goose Creek Parish, South Carolina, was giving such instruction to a thousand slaves in the area.

In North Carolina, missionaries reported a widespread fear among slave owners that the conversion of a slave to Christianity would automatically give the slave his freedom. This idea shows how deeply the authentic ethics of Christianity had made their mark, and how aware men were that slavery and Christianity were incompatible.]

Meanwhile, the missionaries got a strong helping hand from Bishop Samuel Fleetwood of the English Anglican Church.

Bishop Fleetwood preached a sermon on "The Duty of Evangelizing the Negroes," and wrote letters to the various missionaries counseling them to bring the Christian message to Negroes. The sermon and a number of his letters were

printed, and provided potent ammunition for missionaries of many faiths.

For example, the Reverend Ralph Ranford, of Chowan, North Carolina, writes thus of his experience with one slave owner:

By much importunity, in 1712 we prevailed upon Mr. Martin to let him baptize three of his Negroes, two women and a boy. All the arguments I could make use of would scarce effect it till Bishop Fleetwood's sermon in 1711 turned ye scale.

During this period the Baptist Church in America and England was still small. Its great work in the evangelizing of Negro slaves was to begin about 1740, with the rapid growth of the denomination in both England and America. In the earlier part of the eighteenth century the English Anglican Church played an important role in introducing American Negroes to Christianity, as did also the Quakers, Moravians, and Presbyterians. In Maryland, the Catholics followed a policy of liberality in providing religious education and accepting Negroes into the Church.

These early efforts, however, reached only a small portion of the total Negro population of the colonies. The colonists were so divided among themselves on the question of providing religious instruction to Negroes that progress was slow.

During this period the Baptist Church was laying its foundations in America.

In 1611, the English Baptist Church published its first Confession of Faith. The Baptists remained under strong suspicion for their "radical" views on religious freedom, and in that same year a number of them fled to America.

Roger Williams founded the first Baptist church on American soil in 1639, and the ensuing one hundred years saw slow but steady growth. By 1740, there were Baptist churches in every colony. The Baptist Church is the oldest continuously organized group in America.

From the very first, two things distinguished the Baptists: their religious beliefs and their church organization were deeply democratic, and their approach was markedly evangelistic.

We have already seen enough of the basic views of the early Baptist Church to know how strongly it was orientated toward individual freedom. For this reason it found itself in frequent conflict with other groups, and sometimes with civil authorities. But at the same time the Baptists had the priceless advantage of "riding the wave of the future." Their liberal religious ideas kept them in the forefront of progress, while other groups with inflexible dogmatic approaches tended to fall behind.

Their approach was also in complete harmony with the new ways of human life that were being developed in America—what we now call "the American tradition." That tradition and the Baptist Church grew up together.

The complete independence of each Baptist congregation was an important factor in the Church's growth in American soil. It suited well the mood of men and women who had left Europe in search of a freer way of life.

Just after the Baptist Church had completed its first century of growth, America experienced a great religious revival. This revival resulted in a tremendous expansion of the Baptist Church on the foundations that had been laid.

It also brought the Christian religion to a large percentage of America's Negroes. Much of the great work in this field was

done by the Baptist Church, which matched its own growing strength with an ever-increasing evangelism.

The role of the Baptist Church in Negro religious education was so great that, along with the Methodists, they substantially took over the spiritual development of most American Negroes, while the Churches that had been active during the earlier period fell far behind.

This religious revival began about 1740, and within a few years large numbers of traveling Baptist evangelists were working in the Southern states.

The problem of the conflict between Christian ethics and the institution of slavery came almost immediately to the forefront of the thinking of many Baptist ministers. The Church itself stood so strongly for human freedom that there was no escape from the great issue.

The letters of Baptist missionaries and ministers of the period, and the scanty minutes and records of meetings that we possess, show how deeply the problem was agitating the minds of these sincere Christians. We even find in the minutes of the Baptists of Virginia for the year 1789 the following statement:

Slavery is a violent depredation of the rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government, and therefore, we recommend it to our brethren to make use of their local missions to extirpate this horrid evil from the land; and pray Almighty God that our honorable legislature may have it in their power to proclaim the great jubilee consistent with the principles of good policy.

Negroes—and slave owners too—knew or sensed the deep current of democratic feeling that underlay this great Baptist

revival. Many slave owners feared the itinerant missionaries, their camp meetings, and their Sunday-morning plantation meetings with the slaves.

The preachers were often arrested for disturbing the peace. Scores were subjected to mob violence. But the movement was far too powerful to suppress. The itinerant Baptist preachers, for the most part men of the common people with obvious sincerity and intense zeal, carried everything before them. For every white plantation owner who was ready to act against the preachers, there was another plantation owner who refused to stand in the way of the propagation of the message of God.

The personal power of some of these preachers became so great that some amusing reversals took place. In some jurisdictions, the law was afraid to lay hands on them! For example, in 1789 the sheriff of King William County, Virginia, appealed to the governor for assistance and advice. The Baptist and Methodist preachers, he said, were meeting several times a week with the Negro slaves. When the plantation's patrollers dared to venture into the meetings, the preachers threw them out!

It was during this great revival of the latter half of the eighteenth century that the first large numbers of Negroes became active communicants in the Baptist Church, the first Negro Baptist ministers were ordained, and the first Negro Baptist churches were established.

There is great fascination in the question: "Where was the first Negro Baptist church in America established?"

In trying to settle this question, scholars have pieced together enough facts to make certain definite statements. To begin with, it was *not* in the North. A number of Northern Baptist churches, including Roger Williams' famous church at Providence, had Negro members. But there is no question

that the first Negro Baptist church was established in the South.

The trail leads us back into the eighteenth century, and church after church loses its claim. At the very end of the trail, and almost lost in the obscurity of unwritten Negro history, we find ourselves in a tiny town—Silver Bluff, South Carolina. Scholars now agree that this is the place.

A single stroke of the pen by any of three different men associated with this first Negro Baptist church in America could have dispelled forever the doubts and complexities about the exact date of its foundation. But, like so many pioneer efforts, the pioneers who were making history took little trouble to write it—and when they did write, they forgot to mention dates!

Silver Bluff is located in Aiken County, South Carolina, on the north shore of the Savannah River, twelve miles from Augusta, Georgia. In the 1770's it was little more than a small settlement that had grown up around the estate and plantation of an aristocratic planter named John Galphin.

Our meager records suggest that Galphin was a religious man, and particularly interested in the spiritual education of the Negroes on his estate.

History has handed down to us three names associated with the founding of a Negro church on Galphin's estate. We know a good deal about two of them—the Reverend David George and the Reverend George Lisle. They loom large in the subsequent development of the Negro Baptist Church. Regarding the third man, we have only his last name. He is known to us variously as Mr. Palmer and Brother Palmer. Ironically, the only certain fact we have about him is that he is the genuine founder of the Silver Bluff Church.

The Reverend David George, who became minister of the Silver Bluff Church after it had been founded by Palmer, wrote

a series of letters between 1790 and 1793 in which he refers frequently to the events leading up to the establishment of the Silver Bluff Church. The letters make it clear that the events took place a few years before the beginning of the American Revolution.

In one letter he says: "Brother Palmer, who was pastor at some distance from Silver Bluff, came and preached to a large congregation at a mill of Mr. Galphin's; he was a very powerful preacher."

This meeting, obviously held with Galphin's consent, promptly led to more activity.

"Brother Palmer came again and wished us to beg master to let him preach to us: and he came frequently," says the Reverend Mr. George in his letters.

Soon, says George, there were eight regular members who "had found great blessing and mercy from the Lord." Then came the historic event. Here is how the Reverend Mr. George describes it in his letters:

"Brother Palmer appointed Saturday evening to hear what the Lord had done for us, and the next day he baptized us in the mill stream. Brother Palmer formed us into a church, and gave us the Lord's Supper at Silver Bluff."

Available records corroborate fully the simple and beautiful statement of the Reverend Mr. George regarding the formation of the first Negro Baptist church in America. Historians say that the date lies somewhere between 1773 and 1775.

After Palmer had gathered the small group together into a church, he prepared David George to be its pastor.

"Then I began to exhort in the Church, and learned to sing hymns," says the Reverend Mr. George. "Afterwards, the church advised with Brother Palmer about my speaking to them, and keeping them together. So I was appointed to the

office of an elder, and received instruction from Brother Palmer how to conduct myself. I continued preacher at Silver Bluff till the church, constituted with eight, increased to thirty or more, and till the British came to the city of Savannah and took it."

What the Reverend David George tells us about "Brother Palmer" in his letters is all that history has permitted us to know about the man who stands at the very fountainhead of the American Negro Baptist Church. It seems clear from the Reverend David George's letters that Palmer was an itinerant Negro Baptist preacher, one of a number ordained by the Church during the great revival. It also appears that he must have made regular visits to a number of plantations and towns along the Savannah River. One gathers that he shepherded these little flocks with great care, visiting them on a schedule and making provision for their continuing activity.

We are left to guess why the group at Silver Bluff should have been the chosen group to become a regularly constituted Baptist church, a status the other groups on his circuit did not attain. One answer strongly suggests itself: Galphin may have been the only plantation owner who would permit his slaves to organize their own church.

We know more about the Reverend David George. He was born a slave in 1742, probably at Silver Bluff. After the establishment of the historic church, he continued as its pastor until the British took Savannah. The British had promised emancipation to the slaves; and George fled to the city, probably taking the entire Silver Bluff congregation with him.

While George had been pastor of the Silver Bluff Church, another Negro minister, George Lisle, occasionally visited and preached at the church. In Savannah, during the British occupation, Lisle, who was now the servant of a British officer, or-

ganized the second Negro Baptist church in American history. Again the exact date cannot be determined, but the year was either 1788 or 1789. George was active in this church, but Lisle became its pastor because of his better connections in Savannah and the favor with which he was regarded by the British.

At this juncture in the war each side extended the offer of freedom to slaves who would fight in its cause. As it turned out, neither side had any intention of honoring its promise.

After the war the Reverend Mr. George left Savannah and, for reasons unknown to us, went to Charleston (then Charlestown), South Carolina. There he joined a group consisting of about five hundred persons, both white and Negro, who were planning to emigrate to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

In Halifax, the Reverend Mr. George spent ten years as a preacher, acquiring a brilliant reputation for his earnestness and eloquence. He preached to Baptist congregations—many of them all white—at Shelburne, Birchtown, and Ragged Island, Nova Scotia, and Saint John, New Brunswick.

In 1792, this great leader blazed another new trail. Informed by physicians that the climate was seriously injuring his health, he decided to emigrate to Sierra Leone on the west coast of Africa, bringing with him a number of Negroes from Nova Scotia. There he formed his group into a little colony and established the first Baptist church on the west coast of Africa.

Meanwhile, the little church that he had pastored at Silver Bluff was destined to survive and prosper. After the Revolution it was reconstituted by the Reverend Jesse Peters, one of the original communicants, who had since been ordained. The Silver Bluff Baptist Church, which is today an active member of the Convention, is the lineal descendant of the little church

established on Galphin's plantation—the first Negro Baptist church in America.

Of the three men associated with the original Silver Bluff church, we have not yet told the full story of the Reverend George Lisle. It is a remarkable story indeed, and properly belongs to the next phase of the Negro Baptist Church's growth.

CHAPTER III

The Heroic Age

The early centuries of Ancient Greek history are often called the "Heroic Age," because of the number of great men of heroic stature whose names have been preserved for us in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

The years from the founding of the Silver Bluff Church through the 1830's might well be called the Heroic Age of the Negro Baptist Church. Here, at the beginning of the Church's history, several amazing men laid firm foundations for the Negro Baptist Church as we know it today in the National Baptist Convention.

We are constantly amazed, as we put together the story of these men and their accomplishments from the meager existing records. As these men come to life and rise out of the pages of obscure reports and forgotten letters, their achievement is difficult to believe.

It must be remembered that none of these men ever spent a single hour inside a school. Many of them grew to manhood without knowing how to read or write. Most of them received no instruction whatever in the Christian religion until their adulthood. In many cases, their religious activity had to be fitted into their lives and duties as slaves.

Under such conditions the early pioneers of the Negro Baptist Church can certainly be called heroes—heroes both of mind and of spirit.

We have already met one of the truly great men—the Reverend David George, first regular pastor of the Silver Bluff

congregation. His qualities for leadership, his quickness of understanding, and his keen spiritual awareness can all be seen in the story of his preparation for the ministry under the direction of Brother Palmer, and his guiding of the tiny flock. One wonders what such a man might have contributed to the human race if he had received the education and advantages that we in America now regard as the birthright of everyone.

We also find in the Reverend Mr. George a totally unexpected and especially remarkable quality—a simple and graceful literary style as revealed in his few extant letters. This astonishing gift is clearly shown in the excerpts from his correspondence quoted in the last chapter. We have no idea when or where the Reverend David George learned to read and write, or what books—if any other than the Bible—were ever available to him. There is no doubt that his writing shows a strong, biblical simplicity, and thus the Bible may have been his “university.”

The Reverend George Lisle, whom we have already met as a visiting preacher at the Silver Bluff Church, was equally remarkable for his achievements, and the surviving records give us some insight into his most unusual character. George Lisle is the kind of man whose way of doing things stirs up endless debate.

It should be said right away that the Reverend Mr. Lisle was a man of true greatness and beauty of character—no one denies that. The questions arise on certain other points. They are, interestingly enough, the very same questions that arose around the activities of a great Baptist layman a century later—Booker T. Washington.

George Lisle (sometimes spelled Liele) was born in Virginia, about 1750, the slave of an exceptionally kindly owner named Henry Sharpe. During his youth he moved with his master to Burke County, Georgia. Sharpe became a deacon

of the local Baptist church, of which the Reverend Matthew Moore was pastor. Lisle accompanied his master regularly to church. He was profoundly moved by the Christian message, and this was noted by both Sharpe and Reverend Moore.

The Reverend Mr. Moore baptized Lisle and accepted him into the congregation. In their discussions with Lisle, both the Reverend Mr. Moore and Henry Sharp recognized that the young slave had astonishing natural gifts and ministerial potential. Sharp and the Reverend Mr. Moore held private discussions on the matter and agreed that Lisle should be permitted full latitude to develop his abilities.

The Reverend Mr. Moore ordained Lisle, and Sharpe permitted him adequate freedom to travel up and down the Savannah River to preach to groups of slaves on plantations.

It was during this period that Lisle went to Silver Bluff to preach to David George's little church.

Lisle's work was so successful, and Sharp was so impressed, that he granted Lisle his freedom so that he could carry out his ministerial work without interference.

Shortly, however, Lisle's work was interrupted by events occurring during the Revolution. His enlightened and progressive master, Henry Sharpe, was killed, and Sharpe's heirs decided to re-enslave the minister. They had him seized and put in jail in Savannah, preparatory to repossessing him. At this juncture, however, Savannah fell to the British forces.

In some way that is not known to us, Lisle's plight came to the attention of Colonel Kirkland, a British officer in charge of the occupation forces in Savannah. Kirkland acted promptly. He ruled against the heirs, had Lisle released from prison, and employed him as his personal servant.

While he was in Kirkland's employ Lisle became active in establishing the first Baptist church in Savannah, and he became the first minister of this church. The membership of

this church included many of the "refugees" from the church at Silver Bluff.

This church was certainly active by 1779, and may have begun a year earlier. It continued under the pastorship of Lisle until 1782, when the British evacuated the city.

George Lisle frequently mentioned this church in his later letters, but never gave any hint of the size of his congregation. We may perhaps assume that it had some fifty members during Lisle's pastorate. We know the names of six or seven persons who were undoubtedly members, including David George, the former minister at Silver Bluff, and Jesse Peters, the man who was to re-establish the Silver Bluff church after the Revolutionary War.

Although we do not know just where this church conducted its worship, it is reasonably clear that the congregation had no building of its own. On this question, too, Lisle has left us in the dark.

This First African Church of Savannah was the second Baptist church in history to be founded *by* Negroes, but it was the *third* Baptist church *for* Negroes. Silver Bluff was the first. Then, in 1776, the First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, Virginia, was established. This church was for Negroes, but it was brought into being by the initiative of the local white Baptist congregation, rather than the initiative of the Negroes. Once established, however, the destinies of the Williamsburg church lay entirely with its Negro membership; and it was admitted to full membership in the Dover Baptist Association in 1791.

To return, however, to George Lisle: when the British left Savannah, Colonel Kirkland made ready to go to Jamaica. Since Lisle was in danger of re-enslavement if he remained in the city, he offered himself as an indentured servant to Colonel Kirkland in exchange for passage to Jamaica for himself, his

wife, and their three children. Colonel Kirkland accepted the offer and advanced Lisle seven hundred dollars for passage for him and his entire family.

Before he left Savannah, Lisle baptized several new converts, including Andrew Bryan and his wife Hannah. We will hear a lot more about Andrew Bryan in this chapter.

Within a year Lisle had worked off his debt, and received certificates of freedom for himself and his whole family from the benevolent Colonel Kirkland.

He immediately started to preach again, beginning with a group of four persons in a private home. He formed these four persons into a Baptist church, the first Baptist church, white or Negro, in Jamaica.

This got Lisle into really serious trouble with the Jamaica authorities, since the only religious group then tolerated on the island was the Anglican Church of England. He and several of his communicants were charged with "preaching sedition"; they were imprisoned and tried, and one of them was sentenced to death, and hanged.

However, many members of the Jamaica Assembly were aroused over the issue of freedom that the arrests had brought to public attention. To its lasting credit, this body decided in favor of religious freedom, and ordered the release of Lisle and his church members.

The remainder of Lisle's story is an uninterrupted tale of success. He worked tirelessly to extend his work and influence, not only in the city of Kingston, but far into the rural districts. Within a few years he had at least five hundred communicants and was a force to reckon with on the island.

As always, he attracted to his cause a number of important and influential friends. This time his champion was Steven A. Cook, a member of the Jamaica Assembly, who was so impressed by Lisle that he solicited funds for him from wealthy

persons in England. In one of his letters to a potential English donor, Cook made a revealing statement about Lisle: "He is a very industrious man, decent, humble in his maners, and, I think, a good man." This is probably an accurate characterization; we will have more to say about it further on.

By 1790, Lisle's Kingston congregation was able to purchase, for the very respectable sum of 155 British pounds (more than \$750), a tract of three acres in the east end of town. On this tract they built a church, utilizing for the most part the labor of members of the congregation.

This remarkable achievement was soon duplicated by his congregation at nearby Spanish Town, which completed a church building a few years later.

It is clear from his extraordinary story that George Lisle had the gifts of great charm and tact. Time and again, at critical junctures in his career, he was able to attract the interest and support of powerful allies. And his work in Jamaica was so well done, and the foundations of the Baptist faith so well laid by his tireless efforts, that missionaries sent to Jamaica by the English Baptist Church in 1814 received a warm welcome from influential persons throughout the island, and an enthusiastic reception from Negroes who were already familiar with the Baptist faith through Lisle's teaching. By 1842 the Baptist Church in Jamaica was so well established and so powerful that it was able to send no less than forty missionaries to Africa.

Further indication of the warmth of Lisle's character is found in his family life. He delights in telling his London correspondents of his wife and his four children—three boys and a girl.

But for the final judgment of history—here, alas, we are up against some difficult questions.

Was George Lisle too ready to trim his sails to suit the

wishes of slaveholders? Could he have done at least a little more to champion the cause of freedom in the name of the Christian religion?

Note that Steven Cook, in his fund-raising letter to a London friend, described Lisle as "humble in his manners." Was he *too* humble, too anxious to be tactful, too ready to please?

We know that his influence among masters and landowners was very great, and that they placed no obstacles in the way of his preaching of the gospel to their slaves. Indeed, one of the masters stated that Lisle's preaching was a wholesome influence on his slaves. Once they had heard Lisle, they worked without the supervision of a white assistant; it was not necessary to use the whip on them; they were industrious and obedient; and they lived together in unity, brotherly love, and peace. For us, today, this is hardly a recommendation for Lisle!

We know, too, that Lisle disseminated no literature or gave no instruction that he had not first cleared with members of the legislature, the magistrates, and the presiding justices. And, finally, he refused to receive for religious instruction any slaves who did not have the permission of their owners.

It seems clear, in short, that Lisle's message was strongly inspirational, and carefully tailored to avoid bringing the attention of his hearers to the wrongs they were enduring. It is to be remembered that Lisle adopted this approach at a time when Baptist and Methodist preachers and missionaries in many areas were quite fearlessly preaching freedom of the body and the mind, however dangerous such a message might be.

The real question therefore is: Could Lisle have done more? Or was it simply impossible? Had he privately become convinced that his course of yielding to the wishes of slaveholders

was the only possible way that religion could be spread at all?

History has not given us enough details to be able to decide the question. For example, if we knew Lisle's attitude in the face of the persecution and jailing during the early years in Jamaica, it might help. But as it is we simply do not know whether his avoidance of the issue of liberty was shrewd strategy deliberately planned, or failure to take full advantage of every possible opening and opportunity.

Let us admit that we cannot know, and give him full credit for his unequalled contribution to the awakening of Negro spiritual life and the growth of the Negro Baptist Church.

Lisle died, full of honors, in 1828. Almost a century later, when the Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention met in Savannah, Georgia, the top officers of the Convention assembled in the yard of the First Bryant Baptist Church—the lineal descendant of the church founded by Lisle, in 1779. There they unveiled a monument to George Lisle that had been erected by the Convention's Foreign Mission Board. This monument recognizes Lisle as America's first Negro Baptist missionary to another land. The inscription says simply:

LIKE HIS LORD, HE LIVED FOR OTHERS

It is a fitting epitaph for a great man.

The Savannah area produced yet another great man during these pioneer days—Andrew Bryan, the man that George Lisle baptized on the eve of his departure for Jamaica.

There must have been some subtle magic in the air during those remarkable days in the Savannah area. Brother Palmer, David George, Jesse Peters, George Lisle—and now Andrew Bryan! Out of nowhere, a whole galaxy of leaders came

into existence, who would have been the pride of any church in any age.

Andrew Bryan's story is one of final—and permanent—success after unusually cruel persecution.

He was born a slave in 1737, at Goose Creek, South Carolina, and in his young manhood was brought to Savannah. He attended George Lisle's church during the days of the British occupation and, as we have seen, was baptized by Lisle in 1782. Jonathan Bryan, his master, permitted and encouraged Andrew to follow his deep religious bent. He began to preach to both white and Negro congregations in Savannah and soon received strong encouragement from many other white community leaders. Soon Bryan became the spiritual leader of the Church that had been established by George Lisle.

Edward Davis, a wealthy white landowner, permitted Andrew's Negro congregation to erect a rough wooden building on a plot of land in Yamacraw, on the outskirts of Savannah. However, by now the active hostility of the more conservative slaveholders had been aroused. Actual persecution began; the congregation abandoned the temporary building in Yamacraw, and was reduced to holding secret meetings in nearby swamps. This made them, for practical purposes, outlaws, and therefore subject to rigid discipline if caught. Their fortunes were low, but throughout the entire period the congregation never once disbanded.

The role of Jonathan Bryan, Andrew's owner, during this crisis, is not known. It seems that he might have been able to do a little more for Andrew and the congregation than he apparently did.

Andrew's brother Sampson was his principal aide in continuing the church. If Jonathan Bryan did little to help, it is

equally certain that he did nothing to interfere with this activity of his slaves.

The group got important recognition in 1788. The Reverend Abraham Marshall, of nearby Kioke, baptized forty-five members of the group and ordained Andrew Bryan as its minister.

This apparently crystallized the fear of the conservative slaveholders, who were convinced that such a church could only lead to a slave insurrection. Patrols interrupted the meetings and severely punished many of the members. Andrew and Sampson were lashed and imprisoned.

Jonathan Bryan, until now a neutral bystander, finally came to the support of the two men. He interceded on their behalf, and the justices who heard the case thereupon found the men innocent of wrongdoing and ordered their release.

They were permitted to resume worship in a barn on Jonathan Bryan's estate, but harassment by patrols continued. One eavesdropping patroller, however, heard the congregation earnestly praying for the men who had used them so mercilessly. He reported the incident, and many intelligent and decent members of the white community were deeply moved. The oppression began to subside.

The chief justice of the Savannah court ruled that Andrew and Sampson Bryan and their congregation could hold religious meetings, unmolested, at any time between sunrise and sunset. Protected by this ruling, the group held regular meetings at nearby Brampton from 1792 to 1794, continuing to gain both new members and the support of the white community.

By 1794, the atmosphere had decisively shifted, and there was strong general approval and sympathy for Bryan and his communicants. Influential white persons assisted Bryan in a fund-raising campaign, which enabled him to buy a plot of

land at what is now the juncture of Mill Street and Indian Street Lane, in Savannah. Here a church edifice was erected—probably the first permanent church structure erected by Negroes for a Negro church in America.

In 1795, Jonathan Bryan, Andrew's master, died, and his heirs allowed Andrew to purchase his freedom. By 1800, the First African Church of Savannah, with Bryan as pastor, had reached a membership of seven hundred—astonishing testimony to both the brilliance of Bryan's efforts and the affirmative approach of many white slaveholders to the receiving of religious instruction by their slaves.

Sampson Bryan, meanwhile, was also ordained and became assistant pastor.

Within two more years, the building could not hold the congregation, so the Second African Church of Savannah was formed to accommodate the worshippers. Its pastor was Henry Francis, a slave of Colonel Leroy Hamilton.

During the Elizabethan era in England, it seemed that everyone who even tried to write a play produced a brilliant one. Similarly, during this golden age in Savannah it seemed that every Negro who even tried his hand at the Baptist ministry was a brilliant success. Henry Francis turned out to be a magnificent pulpit orator. His good master promptly permitted him to purchase his freedom.

Andrew Bryan passed away in 1812 at the ripe age of seventy-five, having become one of Savannah's leading citizens. So greatly was he respected and esteemed that the Savannah Baptist Association, composed entirely of white churches, passed the following resolution:

The Association is sensibly affected by the death of the Rev. Andrew Bryan, a man of color, and pastor of the First Colored Church in Savannah. This son of Africa,

after suffering inexpressible persecution in the cause of his divine master, was at length permitted to discharge the duties of the ministry among his colored friends in peace and quiet, hundreds of whom, through his instrumentality, were brought to a knowledge of the truth "as it is in Jesus." He closed his extensively useful and amazingly luminous course in the lively exercise of faith and in the joyful hope of a happy immortality.

It is especially remarkable that this tribute was made to a man who, while obviously tactful and charming, was nevertheless unbending and unyielding in the face of active oppression.

The facet of Bryan's character that impresses us most deeply is his courage. The resolution shows how clearly this was felt by the white community, who, in the end, came to respect him greatly for it. It is also clear that, without Bryan's courage, the excellent foundations that had been laid in Savannah during the British occupation by David George and George Lisle would have crumbled away. Bryan held things together and preserved the precious spark during the oppression that ensued after the armed conflict. As a result, his work finally prospered so greatly that Savannah took a position of leadership in Baptist affairs. From that time to this, the city's Baptist churches have been consistently strong and have contributed greatly to the National Baptist Convention.

Meanwhile, the great religious impulse that produced such amazing results in the Savannah area was being felt elsewhere, throughout both the North and the South. Everywhere, remarkable men were springing up, and Negro Baptist churches were being established.

The Harrison Street Baptist Church of Petersburg, Virginia, was founded before 1780, under the influence of the First Baptist Church in Williamsburg, which had been established

in 1776. In 1780, the First Baptist Church of Richmond came into being. In Kentucky, the First Baptist Church of Lexington was founded in 1790. In Georgia, the Springfield Baptist Church of Augusta was founded in 1795 as a direct result of the intense activity in Savannah. All these churches are flourishing today, and, with the churches at Silver Bluff and Savannah, round out the roster of currently active Negro Baptist churches founded in the eighteenth century.

Several instances are on record of Negro ministers being elected to serve all-white congregations, or mixed congregations of whites and Negroes. This was especially true in Virginia, where an atmosphere of general progressiveness was established at an early date. We have noted, in Chapter II, the anti-slavery resolution in the minutes of the Virginia Baptists for the year 1789. While this feeling was of course by no means universally shared, it is true that during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries there was a large amount of Negro religious activity in Virginia. This would not have been possible had the atmosphere in the state been substantially or totally oppressive.

In Portsmouth, Virginia, a tiny Baptist church was constituted in 1789 and duly admitted to the Baptist Association of the Isle of Wight County. This church had both white and Negro members. In 1795 the pastorate became vacant. A guest sermon was delivered by an ordained Negro minister from Northampton County whose name was Josiah Bishop. He was a gifted and powerful preacher, and the mixed congregation immediately appointed him as its new pastor.

Bishop was still a slave. The congregation was so anxious to have his services that it purchased his freedom, and soon thereafter it also purchased the freedom of his family.

This arrangement, however, was simply too far ahead of its time, and opposition soon arose. Reluctantly, under heavy

community pressure, the congregation was forced to choose a new minister.

Bishop then went to Baltimore and became active in the rapid growth of the Baptist faith among Negroes in that city. About 1808, he went to New York, where the Abyssinian Baptist Church had just been founded. We will hear of him again when we describe the birth and growth of this church, the earliest Negro Baptist church in New York and still one of the major churches of the denomination.

History has not been very fair to some of the great early pioneers. In many cases, we learn about their achievements in a few lines of a church report or in a casual reference in a diary or a document—and that is probably all we will ever know.

For example, there is Joseph Willis. We know that he was born in South Carolina, in 1762. He was apparently a free Negro, although we know nothing about the circumstances under which he obtained his freedom.

We catch a glimpse of him as an active worker among Negro Baptists in South Carolina in 1798, but soon thereafter he moved to Louisiana. In 1804, he was ordained by a white preacher in that state, and soon he duplicated the feat of Josiah Bishop—he became the pastor of a church having both white and Negro members. We are told that he founded the church, which was located at Bayou Chicot, and that he endured harassment, hardship, and persecution in his efforts to give it a stable and continuing existence. It is also obvious, however, that other white persons must have favored his work and his cause.

In 1818, the Bayou Chicot Baptist Church was accepted into the membership of the Louisiana Baptist Association, when that Association was established. Joseph Willis was elected as the Association's first moderator—an absolutely

astonishing tribute to the respect and good will he had engendered among both white and Negro members of the group. He served as moderator for several years, and religious documents of the period contain frequent references to the man who was affectionately known as "Father Willis."

Joseph Willis was apparently modest and self-effacing, and did little corresponding. All we know of him are these few facts—facts that tell of remarkable achievement, but leave us forever without any clear picture of the human side of this amazing man.

It is clear that during this era a religious impulse was being felt by Negroes throughout the Southern states, and that the Baptist faith was flourishing wherever its existence was condoned by the authorities. It should be noted that, in addition to all-Negro congregations, there were many white Baptist churches that numbered large groups of Negro slaves among their regular attendance. In many—and perhaps most—areas, this arrangement was preferred, since slaveholders experienced a lingering feeling of fear and distrust of all-Negro congregations conducting their own activities out of earshot of the white community and apart from white supervision.

From 1800 to 1810 the Baptist faith also took strong root among Negroes in the North. There conditions were quite different. Negroes were already experiencing a considerable degree of religious freedom, and few obstacles stood in the way of the establishment of Negro churches. In Boston, the Joy Street Baptist Church was founded in 1804; in New York, as we have noted, the Abyssinian Baptist Church was founded in 1808; and in Philadelphia, the African Baptist Church was established in 1809.

It is remarkable that two of these three earliest Negro Baptist churches in the North were established through the labors of one man—the Reverend Thomas Paul.

The Reverend Mr. Paul was the first great preacher of the "Heroic Age" who was born in the North and did all his work through Northern churches. He experienced no active persecution throughout his long and useful lifetime of service to the Baptist faith.

Thomas Paul was born in Exeter, New Hampshire, "of respectable parents," the *Baptist Memorial* assures us, "on the 3rd of September, 1773." He was undoubtedly a free man in his adulthood, although we do not know whether he was born free or slave.

He experienced a deep religious faith from his early youth, and was baptized in 1789. In 1804, he was ordained in Boston, and soon thereafter he organized the Joy Street Baptist Church in that city. He pastored this congregation faithfully and well for a period of twenty-five years, and at the time of his death the church had become a strong and permanent foundation.

His ability as a pulpit orator was apparently very great, and his reputation soon spread. In New York, some Negro members of the mixed congregation of the First Baptist Church, on Gold Street, were having some problems, and decided to invite him to come to New York briefly to give them advice and help.

For reasons we do not know, these Negro members of the Gold Street congregation felt that the church was not serving them sufficiently well, and they wished to withdraw from it and found a Negro Baptist church in New York. It is altogether likely that the Gold Street congregation may well have been neglecting, to some extent, the interests and needs of its Negro members, since a distinct waning of interest in Negro problems had taken place in many Northern areas after the end of the Revolution, and was not to awaken again for another decade or two.

The Negro members of the congregation had requested per-

mission to withdraw and form their own church. The idea was a very new one to the white members, and they at first hesitated to give their approval. It was at this juncture that the Negroes asked the Reverend Thomas Paul to visit the city.

The Reverend Mr. Paul performed his diplomatic mission brilliantly. Arriving in New York, he negotiated invitations to preach to a number of leading churches in the city. He was enthusiastically received wherever he preached, and immediately gained a position of stature and respect. He then took up negotiations with the Gold Street Church on behalf of its Negro members. His prestige carried the day.

The church building of the Ebenezer Baptist Church was at that time for sale, its congregation having moved to a larger edifice. Thomas Paul not only persuaded the Gold Street church to grant honorable letters of dismission to its Negro members, to enable them to form their own church, but secured the financial assistance of the remaining white congregation in buying the Ebenezer Church building for the new Negro congregation!

The church was gathered on July 5, 1809, under the name of the Abyssinian Baptist Church. Its membership consisted of four brethren and twelve sisters of the Gold Street congregation plus three new converts. From this small but solid beginning, the present-day Abyssinian Baptist Church of New York sprang. The church has long been an important influence in the National Baptist Convention, with its large membership and distinguished pastors.

From the very beginning its choice of pastors indicated its path of growth and strength. In 1810, it selected its first regular pastor, Josiah Bishop, whom we have already met as the pioneer pastor of the interracial congregation in Portsmouth, Virginia. In modern times its pastors have included Adam Clayton Powell, Sr., and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., both im-

portant figures in American national life, the latter a long-term Congressman in the United States House of Representatives.

As for Thomas Paul, his services to Negro Baptists included one more outstanding venture. It is clear from his fluency in the pulpit and his easy association with white intellectual and civic leaders that the Reverend Thomas Paul was an educated man, one of the few pioneers of the Negro Baptist Church who enjoyed this priceless advantage. In his later years he undertook extensive reading about the religious condition of Negro people who lived in other parts of the New World. As a result, in 1823 he submitted to the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts a plan for improving religious conditions among the Negroes of Haiti, and requested that he be sent to these people as a missionary.

The plan was enthusiastically received by the Society, and during the coming year he spent six months as a missionary in the country that had so absorbed his interest. He was well received by President Boyer of Haiti, and his work was welcomed.

"In all of his journeyings," says an article on Paul in the *Baptist Magazine*, "he seemed to go among the people in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ. His understanding was vigorous, his imagination was vivid, his personal appearance was interesting, and his elocution was graceful. We have seen him preach to an audience of more than 1000 persons when he seemed to have the complete command of their feelings for an hour together. His arguments were unanswerable, and his appeals to the heart were powerful."

The Reverend Mr. Paul seemed to experience marvelous peace of mind in all his religious work, and it was reflected in a way of speech that was as slow and gentle as it was powerful. His strength seemed to lie in his calmness of heart.

Lying on his deathbed in 1831, he said to a friend, "Since I saw you last I have been happy in God—my sky has been without a cloud." The next day, his daughter, trying to conceal her sorrow at his suffering and his coming death, remarked what a beautiful day it was. He smiled.

"Just like my mind, my dear," he said. "Not a wave. Unruffled."

A few days later he passed away.

In Philadelphia, Negro members of the predominantly white congregation of the First Baptist Church shared with their brethren in New York a feeling that their church was not supplying their full needs. The church had had a succession of three Southern ministers, and the congregation itself experienced a lessening of interest in Negro problems and Negro religious instruction. In addition, Philadelphia was beginning to experience a great influx of freedmen, and the first groups of runaway slaves, from the South. As always, this sudden increase in Negro population brought with it a temporary increase in frictions and racial prejudice.

For all these reasons, thirteen colored members of the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia petitioned for honorable dismissal from the congregation to form their own church. The petition was freely granted, and in 1809 this small group founded the First African Baptist Church of Philadelphia. Its first minister was the Reverend Henry Cunningham, about whom we have almost no additional information.

Before we close this chapter on the "Heroic Age" of the Negro Baptist Church we must look at two more men who worked closely together in another pioneer work—foreign missions.

As we have seen, the National Baptist Convention regards George Lisle as the first Negro Baptist foreign missionary. He left Savannah for Jamaica in 1783. We have also seen that,

in 1824, Thomas Paul did missionary work in Haiti for a period of six months. Paul's situation differs from that of Lisle in that Paul was sent under the formal auspices of a Baptist Church Society for the express purpose of missionary work. He was not, however, the first to be so honored. Three years earlier, in 1821, the Foreign Mission Society of Richmond, Virginia, and the American Baptist Triennial Convention designated the Reverend Lott Carey and the Reverend Collins Teague as missionaries to Liberia.

Of these two men, Lott Carey is the better known to Baptists today, since his name was subsequently adopted by the Lott Carey Convention, a Baptist missionary group that is still active.

We also know a good deal more about Carey's personal history than we know about Collins Teague's. Like so many of the pioneers of the Negro Baptist Church, Carey was a fascinating man.

Lott Carey was born a slave on a plantation about thirty miles from Richmond, Virginia, in 1780. In 1804, he was sent to Richmond, and hired out at the Schokoe Tobacco Warehouse. He readily gave himself up to the pleasures and vices of the city, but in 1807 he chanced to hear the preaching of a white minister, the Reverend John Courtney, who quoted the words of Christ to Nicodemus: "Notwithstanding what I say unto you, you must be born again."

It was the decisive event of Carey's life. He was converted, baptized, and accepted into the membership of the First Baptist Church (white) of Richmond.

His approach to his work was radically altered. His superior responsibility was recognized, and he was appointed supervisor of all workers in the warehouse. Meanwhile, he had become a member of the First African Baptist Church of Richmond, which then had over two thousand members. A

number of assistant pastors were needed, and Lott Carey soon became one of them.

He was burning to learn to read and write, but a wave of reaction had already begun to set in, in Virginia, and a law had been passed prohibiting this knowledge to slaves. Carey privately approached one of the young white men who worked in the tobacco warehouse, and the young man agreed to be his teacher. Each day they retired for a brief period to a corner, and, with the third chapter of John as their only textbook, worked on the great learning venture. No teacher ever had a more eager pupil, and Carey soon mastered the great art. In later years he often used this chapter of John as the text for his sermons.

His eloquence in the pulpit continued to increase, and he soon received invitations to be guest preacher in several white churches, where he was heard with amazement and respect.

Carey's earnings increased, and in 1813 he was able to purchase his freedom and that of his two children with a cash payment of eight hundred and fifty dollars. His young wife had died, and in 1815 he married again.

Carey was now making six hundred dollars a year, an unusually good salary for a Negro workman. He bought a small farm near the city. He was also involved in another venture connected with the Church. In 1815, after consultations with leading white ministers such as Dean William Crane, Carey founded the Richmond African Missionary Society, to raise funds for missionary work in Africa.

Carey continued as assistant pastor of the First African Baptist Church and carefully shepherded the little missionary fund, contributing to it himself. In five years it amounted to seven hundred dollars.

Meanwhile, other things were happening. In 1813, the great

Baptist missionary Luther Rice, who had just returned from China, came to Richmond and preached rousing sermons urging a rapid expansion of Baptist work in foreign lands. The Richmond Foreign Missionary Society was promptly formed. This society sent delegates to Philadelphia the following year to participate in the organization of the Baptist Triennial Convention, representing many churches both of the North and the South, with mission work as a primary purpose.

By 1820, three separate groups were interested in sponsoring missionary work in Africa—the Triennial Convention in Philadelphia, and both the white and the Negro missionary societies in Richmond.

The question was whom to send.

Representatives of the Richmond Missionary Society approached Lott Carey. And despite the many problems and sacrifices that were entailed, Carey agreed to go, under the sponsorship of all three groups.

The Schokoe Tobacco Warehouse was saddened to lose its best employee. The president offered Carey a raise to eight hundred dollars a year if he would reconsider. But Carey had made his decision.

He requested that Collins Teague, a member of the First African Baptist Church, be appointed as his co-worker to accompany him on his mission, and this was speedily arranged. Teague had been a slave in Richmond and had become a skilled harness maker. Like Carey, he had purchased freedom for himself and his family. He served on occasion as an assistant pastor in the church.

In 1821, Carey, Teague, their families, and a small group of free Negroes sponsored by the African Colonization Society sailed from Norfolk for Liberia.

On the eve of their departure Dean William Crane, who

had taken such a great interest in Carey's work and had encouraged him to form the Richmond African Missionary Society, invited Mr. and Mrs. Carey, Mr. and Mrs. Teague, the Teagues' son Hillary, and Joseph Sanford and his wife, one of the colonizing couples, to an upper room in his home. There he organized them into a church under the pastorate of Lott Carey, which they named the First Baptist Church of Monrovia, Liberia. They planted this church on Liberian soil, where it flourishes greatly today.

The group landed in Sierra Leone, and took several months to establish themselves in Liberia. Carey's wife died of tropical fever. Teague, after a year's work in Liberia, left for a trip to Sierra Leone and was never heard from again.

But in spite of hardship and tragedy, Carey's great ability and indomitable will triumphed. Funds from the missionary societies were often inadequate, and Carey often had to engage in secular work to augment his income. Illness was a constant danger and a frequent reality.

In the face of all difficulties he established the First Baptist Church of Monrovia, and then pressed inland to do missionary work among the Vai tribe at Cape Grand Mountain. His work was highly successful, and within a few years he was one of the leading citizens of the country.

Entry into public affairs was at this juncture inevitable. He was appointed assistant governor of the colony.

It was in the performance of these secular duties that Carey finally fell victim to the dangers that he had been able to avoid during his years of successful preaching and missionary work. In 1828, Carey was overseeing military preparations that the government was being forced to make in the face of the aggressive actions of certain warlike tribes. While he was inspecting provisions, a powder keg exploded, taking

the life of the man who had devoted his towering abilities to the causes of religion and peace.

Carey's work was of lasting significance. He was the first regularly appointed Negro missionary to demonstrate that actual programs could be successfully carried out in Africa over extended periods. His efforts became the fountainhead of the vast Africa missionary work carried on today by the National Baptist Convention and the Lott Carey Convention.

And there, in brief, we have the "Heroic Age," a period that began with the foundation of the First Negro Baptist Church in Silver Bluff, South Carolina, and drew to a close with the approach of the 1830's, about the time that the exploding powder keg took Lott Carey's life in faraway Liberia. During this period a substantial Negro Baptist ministry was built in America, and Negro Baptist churches were established on a permanent basis both in the North and in the South.

It is easy to see, too, that the story of this age is to a great extent the story of a number of amazing men. It is a remarkable and fortunate coincidence that, at the height of the great revival, when an unusual opportunity was offered for bringing the message of the Baptist faith to Negroes, a group of Negro leaders should have sprung up with such great abilities that the historic opportunity was exploited to the full. If either the opportunity or the men had been absent, the growth of the Baptist faith among Negroes would have taken a far different—and much less favorable—course.

As it was, the foundations were so well laid during this period that they survived the great coming storm of increasing Southern reaction, increasing sectional tension, and civil war.

But no era of human history is entirely the story of a few leaders. The faith and courage of their congregations was the rock on which these early ministers stood to accomplish their

tasks. In most cases, the names of the faithful are lost to us in the mists of unwritten history. But we do know that they often braved reprisals in order to come and worship according to their faith. We know that many suffered. And we know that their belief was so strong and their spiritual strength so great that their churches became, in a short space of years, a central feature of Negro life and a principal source of strength for the days of tragedy and danger that lay ahead.

CHAPTER IV

The Tragic Road to Freedom

In 1857, the state of Mississippi issued a Revision of its Code of Laws. One of the laws in this new Code read as follows:

Meetings of assemblies of slaves, or free Negroes, or Mulattoes mixing or associating with such slaves, above the number of five, including such free Negroes and Mulattoes at any place of public resort, at any meeting house or houses in the night or at any school for the purpose of teaching them reading or writing, either in the daytime or at night, under whatever pretext, shall be deemed an unlawful assembly.

And any justice of the peace of the county, or mayor, or chief magistrate of any incorporated town, whenever such assemblage should be held either from his own knowledge or on the information of others, may issue his warrant.

And all slaves offending herein shall be tried in the manner hereinafter provided for the trial of slaves, and on conviction, shall be punished, not more than 39 lashes on the bare back.

Another provision of the new Code read:

Free Negroes or Mulattoes, for exercising the functions of a minister of the gospel, on conviction may be

punished by any number of lashes, not exceeding 39, on the bare back, and shall pay the cost.

The law did provide that religious meetings could be held if masters or employers gave written permission, and if the entire activity was under the watchful eye of a regularly ordained white minister, or "at least two discreet and respectable white persons appointed for the purpose by some regular church or religious society."

This is how far the pendulum had swung toward reaction since the days of the great revival. While the Southern states were not all as restrictive as Mississippi, all of them enacted laws, from the 1830's on, restricting and regulating the practice and profession of religious belief by Negroes, both slave and free.

It is clear from this how fortunate it was that outstanding Negro ministers and strong congregations had been built during the days of the revival. Such a foundation could never have been laid in the immediately ensuing years before the outbreak of the Civil War.

Having cited the laws of Mississippi, we can note the measure of devotion shown by the response of the slaves.

As a practical matter, the law against unlawful assembly was enforced by the plantation patrols, which were a sort of privately employed police. These patrols began to make their rounds late in the day, when work in the fields was ending. Throughout the night they checked the slave cabins and the adjoining lonely, deserted woods and swamps, to be sure that no secret activity was afoot.

These patrols usually ended their rounds just before dawn, and their members then slept through the day. This was quietly noted on many plantations. After the patrolmen had "turned

in," stealthy activity began in the cabins, where the occupants had apparently been peacefully sleeping but in reality had been awake and watchful. Sometimes in a cabin, and sometimes in a deserted and secret place nearby, a number of slaves assembled to pray, under the guidance of their own selected "minister."

These "before-day prayer meetings," undertaken at such risk and sometimes exposing their participants to the cruelest punishment if discovered, are eloquent testimony to the depth of religious feeling that had entered Negro life during the days of the revival.

The Mississippi laws represent, in extreme form, the answer that was finally given by many slaveholders, and many slave states, to the question that had first risen in early Colonial times—should Negroes be permitted to receive the Christian message.

Many Southerners finally decided that the answer would have to be no. At least, the answer would have to be no as far as *independent* religious activity by Negroes was concerned. The slave owner would have to decide whether he wanted his Negroes to have any form of religious instruction. And, if he should favor such instruction, it would have to be given under the careful supervision of white men who would be sure that it was presented in a way that did not raise any questions of justice, equality, or charity.

The problem had been coming to a head for some time. Many Southerners were becoming increasingly unhappy over the rapid rise and growth of independent Negro churches under the direction of ordained Negro pastors. Great impetus was given to Southern fears by rumors of secret slave plots and plans for slave insurrections. The Christian message, these slaveholders reasoned, was in itself suggestive and dan-

gerous, if not given to the Negroes "under white supervision"; and the all-Negro meetings presented ideal opportunities to privately discuss and plan such plots.

This fear was crystallized by Nat Turner's Insurrection, which took place in Virginia in 1831.

Nat Turner was born a slave on a plantation in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1800. He was a person of unbalanced mind, with passionate convictions and hatreds.

In his early twenties he became convinced that he was in direct communication with divine powers. Today, we would call him a religious fanatic. He set about to convince his fellow slaves that he had been appointed by God as His agent for the abolition of slavery.

Many slaves, kept in a state of ignorance by their masters, were prepared to believe him.

In 1831, Turner planned an authentic slave uprising. With a group of followers he entered his master's house and murdered the entire family. Slaves on neighboring plantations joined the insurrection, and a number of other whites in the vicinity were murdered by their slaves before order was restored. Turner was captured, tried, and convicted. On November 11, 1831, he was hanged.

This event caused a shudder of horror to run down the backbone of the entire Southland. Plantation owners, taking no care to differentiate between a religious fanatic like Nat Turner and true ministers of the gospel, simply referred to Turner as a "Negro preacher."

Nat Turner's Insurrection did two things. First, it pointed out to Southern slaveholders a simple fact that always has been true and always will be true of human slavery—it is a dangerous business for the masters. He who lives by force and coercion may die by the same weapons. Second, the In-

surrection made slaveholders doubly fearful of the effects of religion on slaves. Their fear went so unreasonably far after the uprising that it extended to education of any type for slaves.

In 1832, Virginia passed a law to silence Negro preachers. This state, the home of Thomas Jefferson, had made its mark in human history by passing, in 1779, a Statute of Religious Freedom that became the model for the guarantees of religious liberty in the United States Constitution. Now, in the face of fear and the inevitable contradictions of slavery, it abandoned its principles and its birthright.

Virginia's 1779 Statute of Religious Freedom, drafted by Jefferson himself, read in part:

Almighty God hath created the mind free, and manifested His supreme will that free it shall remain by making it altogether insusceptible of restraint. All attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens, or by civil incapacitations, tend only to beget habits of hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the Holy Author of our religion.

We [The Assembly of Virginia] declare that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present act, or to narrow its operations, such act will be an infringement of natural right.

One would think that the children of the men who enacted this great statement of human spiritual freedom might have hesitated to pass laws nullifying it in both letter and spirit; but that is what the Virginia Assembly did in the months of hysteria that followed Turner's Insurrection. The 1832 Vir-

ginia laws prohibited Negro preachers from carrying out their duties and offices. They were permitted to preach only in the presence of duly appointed white overseers.

Other states followed suit. In 1833, Alabama passed a law forbidding preaching either by Negro slaves or Negro free-men, unless the sermon was delivered in the presence of five "respectable slaveholders," and was authorized by "some neighboring religious society." This ridiculous provision, of course, meant that Negroes could not preach anywhere, since the requirements of the law were simply impossible to meet.

In 1834, Georgia restricted the activities of Negro ministers, although in this state, at least, it was theoretically possible to meet the law's requirements. The act specified that neither free Negroes nor slaves could preach unless they were licensed by justices of the peace, after being certified by three ordained white ministers. This amounted to "thought control" rather than outright prohibition, since any Negro preacher who was considered "safe" by local white ministers and the local justice of the peace could get the necessary licenses.

Other states passed similar laws regulating Negro preachers, prohibiting the teaching of reading and writing to slaves, prohibiting assemblages of Negroes after the early hours of the night, and, in some instances, prohibiting free Negroes from living within the borders of the state.

This wave of reaction placed the religious life of slaves entirely in the hands of their masters and the local law enforcement authorities. When permitted by their masters, slaves in some areas attended the church that their masters attended, sitting in special sections. In other instances, separate meetings were held for Negroes under the pastorship of the white minister, or of a "safe" Negro minister.

In the North, meanwhile, things were quite different. The

abolition movement had begun, and many persons and groups interested themselves in the plight of Negroes. Baptist churches grew and thrived with relatively little difficulty.

As the wave of reaction grew in the South, Negro Baptist churches in the North received a growing number of "refugees" into their memberships, and their growth was especially rapid.

By 1846, Philadelphia had, in addition to many mixed congregations, three Negro Baptist churches with a combined membership of over five hundred. In the same year, New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church had grown to nearly five hundred members. In New England, where abolitionist sentiment was becoming especially strong, white congregations welcomed Negroes, with the result that Negro Baptist churches also multiplied, although chiefly in the major cities, where Negro populations were especially large.

It is important to note that, throughout the entire period, that is, from Nat Turner's Insurrection to the beginning of the Civil War, many white persons in the South protested the unreasonable suppression of religious activity among Negroes. Despite passage of the rigid new laws, most of the older, well-established Negro churches in states such as Georgia and Virginia continued at least nominal operations. In the border states new Negro churches were even established. For example, the First Negro Baptist Church of Baltimore was founded in 1836, and the 19th Street Church of Washington, D.C., was founded in 1839—both during the wave of reaction.

A number of Negro ministers in the South spoke out strongly against withholding both education and religious knowledge from Negroes. The Reverend Robert Ryland, president of Richmond College (white), advocated thorough instruction, education, and religious training for all slaves, and compiled a catechism for this special purpose. General Coxe,

of Fluvanna County, Virginia, employed teachers who instructed all his slaves in the arts of reading and writing, and familiarized them with the Bible.

Even in Mississippi, where the proportion of Negro slaves to the white population was especially high and fear among the whites was particularly strong, there were many instances of liberal attitudes on the part of slaveholders. A Northerner, Frederick Law Olmstead, traveled throughout the Southern states in 1850's and wrote a book about his experiences, *Cotton Kingdom*, which has become a classic of American history. Olmstead tells of meeting a large slaveholder in Mississippi who was providing the same type of instruction for his slaves as General Coxe had been providing in Virginia.

The fact that the consciences of intelligent Southern people were severely tried by the dilemma is easily seen by the large number of catechisms for the instruction of Negro slaves that began to appear. In addition to the work prepared by Dr. Ryland, there were, among others, such books as *Catechism of Scripture, Doctrine and Practice Designed for the Original Instruction of Colored People*, by Dr. C. C. Jones, and *Notes and Questions for the Oral Instruction of Colored People with Appropriate Texts and Hymns*, by E. T. Winkler.

In spite of all these efforts, however, fear was the predominating factor in shaping the South's attitude. Those who advocated liberal approaches to the problem of religious instruction for slaves had to base all their arguments on the assurance that this instruction was "safe," and would not cause slaves to think of "dangerous ideas" such as equality and the fellowship of all men in the eyes of God. Religious instruction, said many of its advocates, actually made *good* slaves into *better* slaves. It did not cause them to think about being free.

The South listened to these arguments, but remained very skeptical—as well it might. In the long run, of course, there

simply is no way to reconcile the Christian doctrine with slavery. The more realistic of the slave owners saw this clearly.

In 1845, the issue came to a head in the American Baptist Convention. Most of the Northern Baptist churches had by this time asserted strongly their opposition to slavery, in keeping with the Baptist Church's proud traditions of human freedom. Among other things, the Convention had adopted the unwritten policy of not appointing slaveholders as foreign missionaries.

The Alabama State Baptist Convention decided to force a showdown on this issue. It dispatched a memorial to the American Baptist Convention, of which it was a constituent member, asking that body for a clear statement on the question of refusing to appoint slaveholders as missionaries.

The Convention decided to put the policy in writing. Its reply was as conciliatory as possible, but it stated nevertheless that slaveholders could not be appointed as missionaries because this would amount to approval of slavery by the Convention.

The Alabama State Baptist Convention promptly withdrew from the American Baptist Convention, as did the Conventions of the other Southern states. In 1845 they formed the Southern Baptist Convention.

This schism has never been healed, and the two groups are separate to this day.

During this pre-Civil War time of trial and trouble, it is interesting to note the progress that was being made by Negro Baptists in the new American West, which at that time included such "frontier" states as Ohio and Illinois. Many slaves and freedmen fled to this area and found highly favorable conditions for worshiping in the Baptist faith.

A new revival had begun, and it was especially active west of the Alleghenies. As in the first revival of the eighteenth

century, Baptist preachers and missionaries rode the crest of the wave. Thousands of persons attended revival meetings led by Baptist preachers, and Baptist churches were experiencing another period of tremendous growth.

Before the Civil War, Negro Baptist churches were established in Pittsburgh, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Detroit, and Chicago. Soon there were more Negro Baptist churches in the new West than anywhere else in America. And they kept growing as Negroes streamed out of the South.

One of the most interesting—and unexpected—results of this great growth of Negro Baptist churches in the West is that the first associations of Negro Baptist churches were founded there, rather than in the North or the South, where Negro Baptist churches had been in existence much longer. Perhaps it was the vastness and comparative loneliness of the expanding frontier that caused these churches to feel the need for communication with each other, or perhaps it was the thrill of the newly found freedom.

In 1836, a number of Negro Baptist churches in Ohio established the Providence Baptist Association, which held annual meetings of delegates from its member churches. The Providence Baptist Association was the first group of its kind in America, and was therefore the oldest forerunner of the National Baptist Convention.

Two years later, a number of Negro churches in Illinois followed the lead of the Ohio churches and organized a similar group, which they called the Wood River Baptist Association.

In 1853, these two groups, along with Negro Baptist churches in other Western states, decided that they should establish a single body to promote their mutual interests. They established the Western Colored Baptist Convention, an organization of sufficient size, and representing a large enough group

of churches, to be a real factor on the national religious scene. All of a sudden the Negro Baptist Church had come of age.

These Western Baptist churches experienced only one interruption in their remarkable growth. In 1850, Congress passed the famous Fugitive Slave Act as part of a last-ditch compromise program to try to prevent armed conflict between the North and the South. This Act was a tremendous concession to Southern demands. It required that any person knowing the whereabouts of a runaway slave was required by law to report the matter to the authorities, so that the slave could be returned to his lawful owner.

Many people in the North and the West openly ignored the law, but it remained a serious threat to many fugitive slaves, who could never know when they might be turned in. Many of them therefore pulled up stakes and "headed north" again—this time to Canada. The "underground railroad" was rapidly extended to the Canadian border.

One of the immediate results was the establishment of new Negro Baptist churches in many Canadian cities, founded by fugitive slaves.

One more fascinating development remains to be recorded, to fill out our picture of this era.

The work of Lott Carey in Liberia had never been forgotten by the Negro Baptist churches. The dream of conducting large-scale missionary work in Africa, under the direct sponsorship of Negro Baptists in America, was one that persisted among the churches.

In 1840, the first real effort to turn the dream into reality was made. A group of Negro churches in the New England and Middle Atlantic states established The American Baptist Missionary Convention.

This group existed for twenty-six years before its merger with another foreign missions convention, and was a direct

predecessor of the Foreign Missions Board of the National Baptist Convention. During its existence it sent several missionaries to Africa for brief periods, but lacked both the experience and the funds to carry out a long-range missionary endeavor.

Interestingly enough, its most important accomplishments were on American soil. During the Civil War a number of Negro Baptist ministers volunteered, through the Convention, to go south with the Union armies and act as teachers and ministers for the newly freed Negroes.

When the Convention held its Twenty-third Annual Meeting, in Washington, D.C., in 1863, a committee requested, and received, permission for an audience with President Lincoln, for the purpose of presenting this plan to him. Lincoln was pleased with the idea. He gave them the following note:

Executive Mansion, Washington, D.C.

August 31, 1863

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Today I am called upon by a committee of colored ministers of the gospel who express a wish to go within our military lines and minister to their brethren there. The object is a worthy one, and I shall be glad for all facilities to be afforded them, which may not be inconsistent with or of a hindrance to our military operations.

A. LINCOLN

These ministers were subsequently welcomed by freed Negroes in the South and their work was attended by substantial success. But the dream of effective missionary work in Africa still awaited future events for its fulfillment.

This, then, is the picture of events from about 1830 until the end of the great armed conflict. In the South, the religious

life of Negroes was substantially curtailed and carefully supervised, although it had been so well launched in the preceding "Heroic Age" that it survived all reverses. In the North, Negro Baptist churches continued to grow. In the West, great new strides were made by a whole new group of Negro Baptist churches, founded for the most part by fugitive slaves and Negro freemen who had left the South. These Western churches launched convention groups that were the first of their kind, and were true forerunners of the National Baptist Convention. And finally we find that the idea of missionary work in Africa, which had been demonstrated by Lott Carey to be a practical idea, had taken firm root, and was struggling for an adequate organizational approach.

The Civil War was a great dividing line in American life, and it was a great dividing line in the development of the Negro Baptist Church. In the spring of 1865 we find ourselves at the dawn of a new age—an age in which we are all still living, and whose issues and problems we have not yet solved.

Only in recent years has the actual experience of slavery been fading as a genuine factor in the life and work of the Negro Baptist Church and its leaders. Until at least 1900, most leaders of the Church, and perhaps most of the congregations, had known slavery personally. During the twentieth century the "old-timers" began to pass away, and there arose a whole new generation that had begun its life in freedom. This is a fact that must be understood if we are to grasp the spirit of the great events we are about to describe. The personal experience of slavery hovers around the early history of the National Baptist Convention like a vast shadow. It has sometimes been hard for the "old-timers," who were born slaves, to communicate with the new group.

This is not surprising. How can the man who has known the terror of the patrols, the complete lack of accessibility to

any channels for personal fulfillment, the arbitrary rule of one's life by others, and the vivid recollection of being physically owned by a master communicate his incredible experiences to one who has only read about them in books? The answer is that there is no way at all.

In 1935, the Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention published an eighty-page pamphlet entitled *On Two Hemispheres: Bits from the Life Story of Lewis G. Jordan, As Told by Himself*. The author of this pamphlet was a person whom we will meet frequently in succeeding chapters of this book. He was born a slave in rural Mississippi, and although he did not know the date of his birth, and therefore could give no accurate estimate of his age, he must have been at least eighty years old when he wrote the pamphlet. He passed away in 1940.

The Reverend Mr. Jordan accomplished things that might well make those of us who have had more advantages blush for shame. He became a leader in the movement to organize the National Baptist Convention, and from the beginning showed special interest in foreign-missions work. The Convention's Foreign Missions Board, of which he was the directing officer for twenty-five years, accomplished the things that pre-Civil War Baptist churches had dreamed of. In addition, he exercised his keen historical interests by gathering rare documents and photographs illustrating the early history of the Convention, precious materials that might otherwise have been lost forever. He spent five years putting these materials together for publication. In 1930, the Sunday School Publishing Board issued a tremendous volume, *Negro Baptist History, U.S.A.*, by the Reverend Lewis G. Jordan. The book, though it lacks the form and conciseness of a work by a trained scholar, is an almost unbelievable accomplishment. The authors of the present book freely acknowledge that, if the Reverend Mr. Jordan

had not done his tremendous task so well, this volume could never have been written.

These accomplishments actually are typical, rather than exceptional, for the new group of leaders who emerged from slavery to found the National Baptist Convention and guide it during its early years. They are mentioned here only by way of introduction, and because the Reverend Jordan's little 1935 pamphlet contains some things that can probably serve as the best possible introduction to the story that is to follow. Few of the early leaders had the Reverend Jordan's literary and historic interests. In his pamphlet *On Two Hemispheres* he gives a description of his youthful memories of slavery, of the Civil War, and of the first great experience of freedom that can stand as typical of the experiences of all the men who went on to build the Convention. Although the entire pamphlet will well repay a careful reading, the authors of this book regard the Reverend Mr. Jordan's memories of his early experiences and his descriptions of them a valuable contribution both to the secular and the religious history of America. What follows has been abridged from the opening pages of the pamphlet. It will help us to enter in some small measure into the personal lives and experiences of the great group of new post-Civil War leaders that we are about to meet—the men who brought the National Baptist Convention into existence, and guided it through its first great accomplishments.

I was born on a farm in Lauderdale County, Mississippi, about halfway between Enterprise and Meridian. I have no way of knowing the day of my birth.

My mother was what was called a "Guinea Negro." Her father was brought to Alabama from the Guinea Coast of Africa. He was drowned in the Mississippi River somewhere near Delta, Louisiana, in a desperate

effort to escape from Louisiana back to Alabama where he had been sold away from three small children whose mother was dead.

My father was Jack Gaddis, whose brother, Neal Gaddis, was a planter and slaveholder not far away.

I was a slave of a "poor white man," David Nutt, who owned only my mother with her three children and her sister who had one child.

One Saturday afternoon when I was a tiny little fellow, my mother, after a hard week's work, was washing for the "white folks," and I climbed on a bench to a tub of clothes ready for hanging up, and put my dirty little hands on them. The mistress was passing at the time and in a rage slapped me from the bench, several feet away.

Mother, like an enraged lioness, collared her mistress and nearly choked her to death. Of course, she was severely flogged for it. The sight of her bleeding back and her mournful cries for mercy and pity as the blows from a cowhide rained on her bare back will always remain in my memory.

My master's brother-in-law served as a Confederate soldier, was brought back home wounded, and during the long days gradually grew worse. It was my duty to ward off the flies and mosquitoes with a brush pulled from a chinaberry tree. I remember when he finally died. Forgetting my relief from the long vigil and how often I had been cuffed for nodding and letting the bugs annoy the sick man when I was so tired I could not help it, I wept in my childish way and mourned with the family.

As the war drew to a close the slaves were shifted here and yonder, and we were carried to the canebrakes, and were hidden so as not to fall into the hands of the Yan-

kees, who were pictured to us as dreadful ogres to be shunned at all costs. I firmly believed it all.

We were retained as slaves quite a while longer than was necessary because, panic-stricken, I ran away from the dreaded Yankees when they passed our place. Not knowing where I was, my faithful mother refused to leave with the others. When I returned to the cabin I found her grieving over the loss of the opportunity to leave under the protection of the Yankees, who, she explained to me, were our friends, and if we had gone with them it would mean I would wear pants and shoes like the young master.

After that the master watched the cabins closely and there was no chance to escape his vigilance.

Most of the Union soldiers had been mustered out of service before a second chance came to escape. Finally we got word that two regiments of soldiers, one white, the other black, were still stationed in Meridian. A slave who had been to the Yankee camps came to our cabin late one night and helped my mother and her sister arrange for the adventure of finding freedom.

On a dark night in a downpour of rain, we set out, wading creeks and lagoons in our flight. Only a kind Providence saved us from drowning. Although our journey to the city would not ordinarily be over twelve miles, yet to evade the bloodhounds we could hear baying in the distance, we covered twice as many miles. I have traveled over this route several times since and have learned this fact.

However, we arrived at daylight and were happy beyond description in finding the much-coveted freedom under the protection of humane, kind-hearted soldiers.

One of the soldiers whom they called "Lewis" was especially good to me, and gave me the first pair of trousers I had ever worn.

Up to this time I had no name. I had never been called anything but "Nig." The need for a name developed when, soon after we entered the camp, a good lady named Miss Mary E. Reeves from Newark, Ohio, arrived and opened a school for the "contraband chillun," as we were called, in an empty barrack.

Gathering us around her, Miss Reeves explained to us that she must enroll each child's name. When she came to me, I hated to tell her that my name was Nigger. I remembered the soldier who had given me the pants, and I told Miss Reeves that my name was Lewis.

"Lewis what?" she asked.

My little mind, like a rosebud grown in the shade, worked slowly, but I finally remembered another soldier named Jordan.

I was put down as Lewis Jordan.

The next day she called the roll. When she called Lewis Jordan no one responded. When all the children looked around for the boy I looked around too. I had completely forgotten.

The thoughtful lady remembered me. Looking me straight in the eye, she said, "Isn't your name Lewis Jordan?"

Like a flash I answered, "Present!"

At the beginning our teacher spent quite a little time teaching us such simple religious phrases as "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so." Such words I had never heard before; oh! the effect on my child heart can never be described. Then she taught us the Lord's Prayer.

Shortly thereafter my Aunt Tenah was kidnapped by a former slaveholder and we never heard from her again. Melvina, my older sister, who was about seven years old, was also carried off about the same time. I later heard that she was living in the home of a Reverend Smothers, but I have not seen or heard of her since. Those were slavery days. Thank God they will never come again.

I went to live in Natchez, Mississippi, with a man named Peter Griffin who was an orderly sergeant in the 52nd Colored Regiment. For the first time in my life I was situated so that I could attend Sunday School and day school regularly. I was there two years and during that time Mr. Griffin and his sister saw to it that I went to school, for which I bless their memories.

Mr. Griffin, however, was often hard on me, and I was sometimes severely flogged. I finally fled, walking 140 miles back to my mother in Meridian. For two years I worked in the cotton fields for my "victuals and clothes," which were both very poor. Then I went to Vicksburg and worked as a steamboat hand.

When I was about 16 or 17 years old a revival meeting was held on Belks Island, near David Bend, across the "Ole Mississippi" River. I attended. Reverend Loren Wood, the preacher, built his sermon on 1 John 5:1—"He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God."

I returned to hear him several times, and felt that, although I was still young, I nevertheless believed. I made open confession of my Lord and became converted, along with 80 others.

We were all baptized in the Mississippi River, on the Jeff Davis plantation in Warren County.

On September 12, 1873 I was licensed to preach in Davis Bend. I was ordained November 1874 at Cotton-

wood near Lake Providence, Louisiana, and entered the pastorate of my first church—Yazoo City, Mississippi, in 1875.

But I felt keenly the need of more preparation, and in 1879 I entered the Bible Institute in Nashville, Tennessee (afterwards Roger Williams University). I had been a baker on the steamboats, and now it stood me in good stead, as I became the school's baker to pay my bills.

We have quoted at some length from this fascinating story for several reasons. First, it illustrates far better than any dry description by historians the living mood and temper of those strange new days of liberation that followed the end of the Civil War, when a Negro for the first time could move freely and sample the world. Second, it shows the valuable role played by missionary educators such as Miss Reeves, and missionary preachers such as the Reverend Loren Wood, in helping the Negro freedman to find his way in these early years of the new era. Third, Lewis Jordan's experiences are fully typical of those of the other men who were to bring the National Baptist Convention into existence in 1880, and they give the personal dimension that will enable us to understand these events "from the inside."

Fourth, in the Reverend Mr. Jordan's reminiscences the National Baptist Convention possesses an original treasure of the indomitable human spirit that can take its place with the great, timeless documents of man's adventure on earth.

CHAPTER V

The Rising Star — Birth of the Convention

The year 1895 was a big one in Atlanta, Georgia—big for the city of Atlanta, and even bigger for the moral and spiritual history of Negroes in America.

To begin with, a great Southern States Exposition was held in Atlanta that year. The exposition's purpose was to show how well the South had recovered from the tragedy of the Civil War and the chaos of the Reconstruction Era.

One of the exposition's climactic moments came with a series of speeches given by the South's ablest leaders to a vast throng in Exposition Hall. On the speakers' platform—for the first time in Southern history—the group of famous men who were to speak included a Negro. Modestly awaiting his turn to address the tremendous assemblage was America's most famous Baptist layman and most famous Negro—the founder and president of Tuskegee Institute, Dr. Booker T. Washington.

Dr. Washington was introduced by none other than Governor Bullock of Georgia.

The man who had been born a slave thirty-seven years before rose, stepped to the center of the platform, and looked for a brief, dramatic moment, into the sea of silent faces before beginning to speak.

There are many historians who think that the fate of the Negro in American life for the next fifty years was determined by what Booker T. Washington said during the next ten minutes.

Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address was undoubtedly one of the most important speeches ever made. To his hearers, and to all of America, he was the personal symbol of the rise and progress of the Negro from slavery. To many people, Booker T. Washington *was* Negro America at its best.

Historians are still debating about what he said—and probably always shall. One of the authors of this book was a member of a doctoral seminar in American Civilization conducted at Columbia University, in 1955, by the distinguished Civil War scholar David Donald. When the seminar discussed Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address, the fur flew. The issues, the questions, the doubts, the division of opinion among men of good will were as strong in 1955 as they were in 1895. For two hours the debate waxed fast and furious, while the remainder of the seminar's agenda for that evening was completely neglected. After it was over, most of the members adjourned to a neighboring coffee house and continued arguing late into the night. Still no one could agree!

What caused all this argument?

We suggested the answer back in Chapter III when we discussed the work in Jamaica of the pioneer Baptist missionary George Lisle. We agreed that Lisle had accomplished marvelous things, but pointed out that historians wonder whether he couldn't have done still more. Did he fail to see that more might have been done? Or did he see the potential for doing more, but make a private decision that he would compromise in order to get his great work accomplished without arousing opposition? If the latter, was he right in assuming that, if he had pushed harder and been more uncompromising on the issues of freedom, he would have roused such a storm that his work would have been ruined?

We pointed out that no one really knows the answers, and

that the course of wisdom seems to lie in paying full tribute to the amazing things that he did accomplish.

Now, with Booker T. Washington's Atlanta Exposition Address, we find that we have the same kind of debate. No one denies that it was a brilliant speech and an outstanding accomplishment. But the question raised by "the doubters" is this: Could he have done even more? Some people have suggested that Washington's speech indicated his willingness to postpone full social equality in order to assure the Negro's economic progress. If this is true, was it a necessary compromise? Or has Washington's real position on social equality been misunderstood by his critics?

And finally, if Washington's speech *was* a compromise on the matter of social equality, was there really any other position he could have taken as the featured Negro speaker in a Southern white exposition, thirty years after the Civil War?

If you would like to have some fun some evening, get a copy of Booker T. Washington's address, invite some friends over, get everybody to read it, and then ask these questions. Chances are you will have a long evening of fascinating argument.

For what it is worth, the authors of this book are willing to suggest, at least partly, their own view. They think, first of all, that the critics of this towering Baptist layman have overplayed and distorted his views on social equality. And they think, secondly, that the most truly important feature of the Atlanta Exposition Address has been overlooked by those who have picked it apart word by word in attempting to prove their theories.

When Washington completed his address to the crowd of ten thousand people and turned to take his seat, he found that he could not sit down. Completely overcome by the magnifi-

cent speech, Governor Bullock had leaped from his chair on the speaker's platform and, completely forgetting his ordinary social prejudices, had rushed across the stage to clasp Washington's hand. Tears were streaming down the Governor's face. Others on the platform crowded around Washington. Turning to look at the audience, Washington saw that they were on their feet, cheering. With his sure instinct for the right action in great moments, he took a step forward toward the crowd, so that they could see the Governor firmly clasping his hand. Then he took his seat. The ovation did not subside for ten minutes.

The fact is that, when Washington sat down with the cheers thundering in his ears, the Negro had entered the mainstream of American life once and for all—forever. What more important measure could there be of his accomplishment?

As if to emphasize this as the true meaning of Washington's address, another event took place in Atlanta that year, with the same unmistakable significance. A large assemblage of Negro ministers from states throughout the North and South sat in the First Baptist Church of Atlanta, studying copies of a document that had been passed out to them. The document had a preamble—over which they had argued for at least two days—and then began with the following simple statement:

ARTICLE I

Name

This body shall become known and styled, The
National Baptist Convention of the United States
of America.

By the time the ministers had completed their six days of

meetings, and had voted yes on this and other provisions of the new organization's constitution, they had taken a major step in bringing the Negro into the spiritual and religious mainstream of America. The Negro Baptist faith had come of age.

It had been a slow and difficult process—partially because *nothing* came easy during those first momentous years after the end of slavery.

And, in the case of the Baptist faith, such things come even more slowly than with most other religious faiths, because Baptists have always put such heavy emphasis on the freedom of the individual and the freedom of the church to which he belongs. This great freedom of action that is guaranteed to every Baptist and to every Baptist church has often meant that it has been hard to build unified action on a large scale.

*The National Baptist Convention as we know it today came into existence in Atlanta on September 28, 1895. But it represented the unification of three separate groups that were already in existence. The oldest of them, which was called the Foreign Mission Convention of the United States before it became the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, was founded a full fifteen years earlier, in 1880. It is for this reason that the year 1880 is usually accepted as the real date for the beginning of the movement that produced the National Baptist Convention.

Actually, there had been a drift in the direction of Baptist Church unity for a long time—even before the Civil War. It is almost amusing to note the tremendous number of miscellaneous groups and associations of churches that were formed before the movement really hit its stride in 1880.

In Chapter IV we noted that the first stirrings took place in the West, with the founding of the Providence Baptist Association in Ohio, in 1836, and the Wood River Baptist Association in Illinois, in 1838. In 1853, these two groups merged into a

larger movement, the Western Colored Baptist Association. Meanwhile, in the New England and Middle Atlantic states, Negro Baptist churches had set up a group called the American Baptist Missionary Convention.

The American Baptist Missionary Convention began to disintegrate during the Civil War, and in 1866 it merged its remaining programs and assets with the Western group, which was then calling itself the Northwestern Convention.

The merged body took yet another name. It became the Consolidated American Baptist Missionary Convention. This organization, like its predecessors, lacked the strength for continuation and growth, and soon it too began to fade.

Somewhere along the line—and the most exact research fails to indicate just when or where—another group came into being. This one was called the African Mission Convention. It may have been a continuation of the languishing work of the Consolidated Convention, and it probably was started in the late 1870's. It is of interest to us today only because it managed to stay alive long enough to be swept up, in 1894, into the irresistible tide that was to produce the National Baptist Convention.

One of the fascinating aspects of all this earnest, if premature and poorly planned, activity is its strong orientation toward foreign-mission work in Africa. These old organizational names—now nothing more than fossils in the historian's showcase—bear mute testimony to a deep and burning desire on the part of Negro Baptists throughout the country to do something *effective* in the way of foreign-mission work on the continent from which many of them had only recently come. This interest has remained uninterrupted throughout the entire subsequent history of the National Baptist Convention, with the result that the Foreign Mission Board has always been one of its most vigorous and active arms.

One must confess, however, that this well-intentioned effort continued to fall short of its goal until the year 1880. In that year, the man who was finally to turn the shadowy work of Lott Carey into an effective foreign-mission effort finally arrived on the scene.

He was the Reverend W. W. Colley, who had been appointed a missionary by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and had gone to Africa under their auspices in 1875. He remained in Africa for four years—a long sojourn that testifies to the enthusiasm that the Southern Baptist Convention felt for the success and value of his work.

The Reverend Mr. Colley returned in 1879 with a deep conviction that there was a great role to be played in Africa by Negro Baptist churches. He discussed his ideas with the Colored Baptist Convention of Virginia, which employed him for the purpose of calling a general convention of Negro Baptist churches to make a united attack on the problem of foreign missions.

The Reverend Mr. Colley wrote hundreds of letters and traveled throughout the North and South, speaking in churches. As a result of his efforts, 151 delegates from churches in eleven states assembled in Montgomery, Alabama, on November 24, 1880.

As first temporary chairman of the meeting, the Reverend Mr. Colley lifted the gavel on the morning of the twenty-fourth and brought to order one of the most important religious conferences ever held in this country.

The Reverend Mr. Colley had laid the groundwork well. The delegates understood not only the purpose of the proceedings, but also the kind of commitment and cost that effective work would entail. They were authorized by their churches to make the necessary commitments of support.

At this meeting the Foreign Mission Convention of the

United States of America was formed. The preamble of its constitution is worth quoting, because it reflects the profound concern for missionary work that was the basis for the first really successful effort at national co-operation by the Negro Baptist churches of America:

Whereas it becomes necessary and is our duty to extend our Christian influence to advance the Kingdom of Christ, and as African Missions claim our most profound attention and feeling, that we are most sacredly called to do work in this field and elsewhere abroad; therefore we, the representatives from the various churches, Sunday Schools and societies of the Baptist Denomination in the United States, do hereby solemnly organize ourselves in a convention for the above named objects: We agree to the following constitution: This constitution shall be styled and known as the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention of the United States of America.

It was decided to establish the group's headquarters at Richmond, Virginia, and the Reverend Mr. Colley was appointed Corresponding Secretary. He held this position for three years, and then returned to Africa, along with five other missionaries who were sponsored by the Convention.

Effective foreign-mission work by Negro Baptist churches, which had been a distant goal for decades, finally became a reality within three years after the founding of this Convention.

The Reverend Mr. Colley was the first of a great new group of Negro leaders that rose in the Baptist Church during the latter part of the nineteenth century. These men shared certain experiences in common. All of them had been born slaves. However, unlike the first great group of leaders, during the

"Heroic Age," this new group grew to maturity in freedom, and had been able, almost without exception, to obtain at least the rudiments of an education. Our quotation in Chapter IV from the Reverend Mr. Jordan's memories of the early Reconstruction days is typical of the experiences of many of these new leaders. In most cases, they turned meager opportunities to great advantage, and demonstrated what could be achieved if even small chances were offered.

After the foundation of the Foreign Mission Convention, things began to move fast, and one by one the new leaders came forward to build the Convention.

The first outstanding leader to emerge after the Reverend Mr. Colley was a man who had enjoyed exceptional cultural and educational opportunities. He, in turn, accomplished so much that his name is a permanent part both of the secular and of the religious history of Negro culture in America.

✱ William J. Simmons was born a slave in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1849. By a stroke of unusual fortune, he, his mother, and his two sisters were smuggled aboard a vessel in Charleston Harbor when he was a boy of about ten, and all were taken to Philadelphia as runaway slaves.

William became a shoemaker, working first in Philadelphia and then in Chester. An uncle, Alexander Tardiff, a Philadelphia man of some education, provided him with the rudiments of an education.

In 1862, he became an apprentice to a dentist in Bordentown, New Jersey, where he demonstrated a quick mind and great aptitude. The war, however, had stirred his imagination, and in 1864 he ran away and joined the famous Forty-first Division of United States Colored Troops. He was honorably discharged in September, 1865, and was promptly re-employed by the kindly and tolerant dentist.

Simmons, a serious lad of obvious religious bent, professed

his faith and was accepted into full membership by the Baptist Church of Bordentown, whose congregation was otherwise entirely white. He rapidly attracted the attention of a number of wealthy members of this congregation by his charm and his intellectual gifts.

William made known to some of these new friends his growing desire to enter the ministry. A few quiet conferences were held among the church's elders. They then approached William and told him that, if he wished to study for the ministry, the church would pay the entire cost.

Overwhelmed with gratitude, young Simmons enrolled in the theological faculty of Madison University, in 1868, and was graduated in 1871. His zeal for learning had only been sharpened by this experience. With the continued backing of the people who had so much faith in him, he then enrolled at Howard University in Washington, D.C., and received a second degree from that institution in 1873.

Simmons was ordained in 1878 and became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, the following year. However, his career as a national leader was not launched until 1880, when the trustees of the Normal and Theological Institute of Louisville, Kentucky, offered him the presidency of the school.

He accepted this invitation. The magnitude of his accomplishment in this post can be gauged by a single fact: the school is now called Simmons University. It is one of the nation's leading institutions of higher learning.

During the first year of Dr. Simmons's presidency of the Normal and Theological Institute, the Foreign Mission Convention had been organized in Montgomery, Alabama, under the guidance of the Reverend Mr. Colley. Simmons watched this development with the greatest interest. He recognized it as one of the most important strides forward that the Church

had yet taken. But he also saw that there was yet more to do.

Throughout the country there existed a number of associations and conventions of Negro Baptist churches, some large, some small, some active, some inactive, some interested in foreign missions, and some placing their emphasis in other areas of work. Earlier in this chapter we cited a few of the largest of these groups; they were many more.

Simmons reasoned that, just as a national convention had been formed for foreign-mission work, another national convention should be formed that would concern itself with other major concerns that the Baptist churches had in common.

The Reverend Mr. Simmons held some discussions with other Church leaders, who enthusiastically endorsed his idea.

On April 5, 1886, the Reverend Mr. Simmons sent an open letter to leading Negro Baptist clergymen and laymen, suggesting that a national convention of the denomination should be called to set up a permanent organization for all the churches. The reasons for creating such a group, he suggested, were as follows:

1. To promote personal piety, sociability, and a better knowledge of each other.

2. To be able to have an understanding as to the great ends to be reached by the denomination.

3. To encourage our literary men and women, and promote the interest of Baptist literature.

4. To discuss questions pertaining especially to the religious, educational, industrial, and social interests of our people.

5. To give an opportunity for the best thinkers and writers to be heard.

6. That, united, we may be more powerful for good and strengthen our pride in the denomination.

This interesting list of reasons for calling a national con-

vention tells us a lot about the role of the church during the Reconstruction period.

First, the Church was, in many instances, the only activity in which Negroes were able to exercise their full native talents and abilities. Time and again we find that leaders of the Negro church in this era had held only menial jobs before blossoming in their ministerial roles. Other professional avenues in our society had as yet barely been opened to Negroes. The Church, therefore, was performing an indispensable function in providing a voice for capable Negroes and an institution in which they could exercise their abilities to the fullest.

Second, it is clear that the Church also provided a potential for intellectual, artistic, and cultural expression among both clergy and laymen that was not yet available in any large degree in society as a whole. Note Point 5 in Simmons's list of reasons for having a convention. With such a convention, he says, our best cultural abilities could find a channel for use and dissemination.

Third, we can see from Simmons's list the important role that the Church was playing in preparing the Negro for full participation in the life of American democracy. Within the Church itself, the running of its affairs provided its members with invaluable training and experience in the actual workings of the democratic process. And the Church inevitably served also as a meeting place in which broader problems of the race's progress could be discussed in a framework of morality. Simmons's Point 4 suggests the importance of the Church's role in making such discussions possible.

Simmons's letter was enthusiastically received, and a convention was scheduled to take place in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 25, 1886. It was attended by six hundred delegates from churches and church organizations throughout the coun-

try, making it easily the most important meeting of its kind that had yet been held.

The delegates established at this conference the American National Baptist Convention—a long stride forward toward the National Baptist Convention that we know today. However, it was an entirely separate organization from the Foreign Mission Convention that had been established six years earlier, and the American National Baptist Convention did no work in this area.

It hardly need be said that the first president of the American National Baptist Convention was William J. Simmons.

Simmons was re-elected annually until his untimely death four years later, in 1890. When he died he was only forty years old. Few men in history have accomplished so much in so short a life span.

In 1893, a new organization was formed—the Baptist National Educational Convention. Its chief purpose was to provide training materials and facilities for strengthening the ministry and leadership of Baptist churches. It was separate from both the Foreign Mission Convention and the American National Baptist Convention.

With these three major bodies in existence, however, the next step was obvious.

A preliminary move toward consolidation was taken in 1893 by the Foreign Mission Convention. It absorbed two other groups—the Union of the New England Convention, and the Baptist African Mission Convention, which we met earlier in this chapter—to form what was called The Tripartite Union. This eliminated a great deal of duplicated effort and left the three major bodies to discuss the matter of consolidation.

By this time the Negro Baptist Church, which had begun with little or nothing at the end of the Civil War, in 1865, was a tremendous national movement with over a million

members, well over ten thousand churches, and property assets totaling tens of millions of dollars. Consolidation of the three national conventions would bring into existence one of the major unified religious bodies in America.

At the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Foreign Mission Convention in 1894, Dr. A. W. Peques, a graduate of Bucknell University and one of the Convention's most influential men, asked the chairman if he might have the floor. Receiving permission, he then rose and proposed a resolution that is one of the historic documents of Negro Baptist history. Here is what it said:

Whereas, the interests and purposes of the three National Bodies, namely, the Foreign Mission, the National, and Educational Conventions, can be conserved and fostered under the auspices of one body; and whereas the consolidation of the above-named bodies will economize both time and money; Therefore, be it resolved, that the foreign Mission Convention appoint a committee of nine, who shall enter immediately into consultation with Executive Boards of the National and Educational Conventions for the purpose of effecting a consolidation of the three bodies upon the following plan:

1. That there shall be one National organization of American Baptists.

2. Under this, there shall be a Foreign Mission Board, with authority to plan and execute the foreign mission work according to the spirit and purpose set forth by the Foreign Mission Convention of the United States of America.

3. That there shall be a Board of Education and a Board of Missions to carry into effect the spirit and

purpose of the National and Educational Conventions, respectively.

In other words, the time for union had come. And the formula that Dr. Peques proposed—an all-over convention composed of various boards—was exactly the one that was to be adopted.

Meanwhile, something else was happening that served to give the unification movement another big push.

For some time Negro leaders had been urging the American Baptist Publication Society to accept for its Sunday school publications some articles and contributions by Negro churchmen. The Society's publications were used throughout the Negro Baptist Church. Responding to these urgings, Dr. B. Griffith, the Publication Society's director, invited a number of Negro leaders to prepare articles for forthcoming issues of the publication *Sunday School Teacher*.

Unfortunately, Dr. Griffith's views were not shared by more conservative elements in the Society, particularly certain Southern churchmen. It was strongly suggested that, unless the invitations to the Negro leaders were withdrawn, the Society's publications would no longer be used in areas where they were circulating in large quantities.

Dr. Griffith's hand was forced. It was necessary for him to write again to the Negro leaders, canceling his invitation to contribute to the magazine.

This, of course, left scars on all sides. Negro leaders agreed that the obvious way to surmount such a bar was to set up their own publishing activity, which they would own and control. Such a publishing house, of course, could be established as one of the boards of a national convention. Its magazines and periodicals could be used by Negro Baptist churches and Sunday schools. Articles for such publications

would be judged entirely on their merits without facing the obstacle of racial problems.

This, then, is the long road that led to Atlanta in September, 1895.

There the National Baptist Convention, in the form that we know it today, came into being. A constitution was adopted, and three boards were established: the Foreign Mission Board, the Home Mission Board, and the Educational Board.

The question of how to handle the publication problem was solved the following year with the addition of a Publishing Board.

The National Baptist Convention was especially fortunate in having, at the time of its launching, a number of excellent leaders to choose from in naming its officers. It was even more fortunate that two of the most important officers—the president and the corresponding secretary of the Foreign Missions Board—were able to serve the Convention for remarkably long periods, thus providing continuing leadership during the difficult period of growth.

The new president was perhaps the most versatile in the whole constellation of post-war Negro leaders, and it is a tribute to the perception of the convention members that he should have been selected for the historic responsibility. He was the Reverend E. C. Morris, who, like the other leaders, had been born a slave.

The Reverend Mr. Morris's original home was in Murray County, Georgia, where he was born on a plantation in 1855. He lost both parents when he was quite young. Like William J. Simmons he became a shoemaker. In 1874 he was converted and baptized into membership of the Star Baptist Church, in Stevenson, Alabama. He was soon thereafter ordained; and, moving to Arkansas, became president of the Arkansas State Baptist Convention in 1882.

He was a principal figure in the establishment and early growth of the Foreign Mission Convention in the 1880's. In Arkansas, he established the state's first denominational newspaper, *The Arkansas Times*.

In addition to being an active minister, an organizer, and a publicist, the Reverend Mr. Morris gave his attention to the educational problems of the rising Negro generation. In 1884, he founded, almost singlehanded, the Arkansas Baptist College, supported and controlled entirely by the Negro Baptists of the state. This was the first time that such a thing had been accomplished by a state Baptist group; and, as a matter of fact, it has been accomplished since only rarely.

Meanwhile, he had become pastor of the First Baptist Church in Helena, Arkansas, and had founded yet another newspaper. This one, *The People's Friend*, was a weekly, and circulated throughout the South and Southwest.

This dynamic man, whose interests and personal experience covered every area in which the new National Baptist Convention was to operate, was chosen to guide its destinies. He served as president for twenty-eight years—longer than anyone has served since. The Convention's permanent foundations were built by his incredible energies and his steady hand.

In 1896, the Convention chose as corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board none other than Lewis G. Jordan, whom we have already met through quotations from his memoirs, which we used to introduce our description of this era.

The reader will recall that our selection from his memoirs ended with his entry into Roger Williams University, in Nashville. He graduated in 1883 and began pastoring in San Antonio, Texas, and later in Waco. While pastor of New Hope Church in the latter city, he was sent to Liberia by a group of his parishioners who wished to know about colonization op-

portunities. There he met several of the missionaries who were working there under the auspices of the Foreign Mission Convention, and foreign missions became an absorbing interest with him.

In 1891, he became pastor of Union Baptist Church in Philadelphia. By this time he had already become a national figure through his activity in the Prohibition Party, and in Pennsylvania he received the party's nomination for congressman-at-large. He campaigned vigorously, but the state was not disposed to elect any member of his party at that time.

On his election as corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, in 1896, he promptly inaugurated the magazine *Mission Herald*, which is still published by the Board.

The actual story of the foreign-mission work must be saved for another chapter, as must the stories of the other major achievements of the Convention. But here we must pause to look back over the closing of an era.

What are we to say about this strange era that began with the Confederate surrender at Appomattox, and ended with the American Negro taking the direction of his future into his own hands, and preparing for a life of full citizenship?

This much we certainly can say—that it is a remarkable page of human history. And we can also say that, during this period, the Church played a *central role* in the great movement “up from slavery.” It was the door to full citizenship responsibility, a door that was open when others were still closed. Here a man could rise as far as his abilities could carry him, and here he entered a moral universe where his status and dignity as a human being were absolutely affirmed.

In this age of change, the Church made a contribution to American history that has perhaps never been fully studied or appreciated. It is a story of achievement of which every Baptist can be proud.

CHAPTER VI

Some Growing Pains

Today, members of the National Baptist Convention know vaguely that storms and problems marked its early years, along with the great accomplishments that it began to achieve from the first years of its existence. Members know about these storms because their results can still be seen, although the causes of them have been all but forgotten.

During its early years the united Baptist movement suffered two defections, and as of this writing the breach has not been fully healed. In both cases, disagreements arose among men of good will, and in both cases a general lack of experience in organizational procedure and statesmanship on both sides were important factors. In the near future it is likely that these breaches *will* be healed, since their immediate causes have long since lost all significance.

These early controversies are fascinating for another reason, too. They are wonderful studies in simple human frailty. We can look at them today and easily show where the fault lay, on both sides. Here were true men of the Kingdom, who slipped and fell on some very mundane banana peels. For us today, the question is not one of blame at all. When we read these stories, we had better turn the searchlight into our own minds and hearts, to see if we have really learned the important lessons, and are really wiser.

The first difficulty came to a head within two years after the Convention was founded. It was a classic case of the conservative-versus-liberal conflict that exists in every human or-

ganization, and it is also a classic example of how *not* to handle this healthy, perennial conflict.

In this matter we are going to have to end up giving a gentle scolding to that good, brave man, Lewis Jordan, whose memory we nevertheless reverence with all our hearts. Indomitable crusader that he was, he sometimes tried to move too fast without being careful enough about sensitive problems of tact.

In the 1890's, while the Convention was coming into being, a true conservative-versus-liberal conflict had arisen among Negro leaders of the day.

For the most conservative men, the central fact was that they now were enjoying the blessings of completely free worship. All of them had grim and tragic memories of the days when worship was *not* free. They felt so deeply grateful for this blessing that they did not experience a feeling of urgency about other issues that went above and beyond the question of simple religious freedom.

"Be patient," the conservatives counseled. "In time, everything will come."

Others, particularly the younger men, looked at things differently. Yes, they said, we have religious freedom now, but does that mean we have to wait for other things? Why not meet time halfway—or even more than halfway—and really make an attack on these other problems?

It is the age-old conflict. We have it with us today.

The problem of the Sunday school literature is a fitting example; in fact it was the initial cause of the first crisis. The reader will recall that the American Baptist Publication Society first invited several Negro clergymen to contribute some articles to its periodical and then withdrew the invitation under pressure from conservative Southern churchmen.

The liberal Negro leaders decided to do something about it. One of their most important reasons for establishing the National Baptist Convention was to provide a means for issuing Sunday school literature for Negro churches that could be judged purely on its merits, and not on the basis of skin color. ✓

The conservatives viewed this approach with the deepest misgivings.

"Why get so excited?" they said. "It will all straighten out in time."

Among the foremost spokesmen for the conservative group were some of the officers and leaders of the Foreign Mission Convention, which had its headquarters in Richmond, Virginia. Included in this group were many of the professors of Virginia Union and Shaw universities. Despite their misgivings, they nevertheless agreed to go along with the founding of the Convention.

However, when Lewis Jordan was appointed corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board the next February, he made a tactless blunder. One of his first actions was to move the Board's offices from Richmond, Virginia, where they had been located ever since the Foreign Mission Convention had been established in 1880, to Louisville, Kentucky, where Jordan felt they would be more strategically situated for securing wider support.

This action caused the Virginia conservatives to rise up in alarm. They feared that this relocation of headquarters would substantially deprive them of a real voice in the conduct of affairs.

Now the conservatives, who, like the liberals, were truly constructive men, had been willing to go along with the Convention as long as they felt that at least their voices would be heard and their influence felt. But the abrupt removal of the ✓

Mission Board's offices so far from the old home grounds suggested to them that their voices were not going to be heard and their influence was not going to be felt.

Their concern deepened when a crash program for the creation of a publishing board was announced at the next annual convention, although, in all likelihood, this alone would not have caused them to leave the Convention.

But the two problems put together tipped the balance in favor of secession. In 1897, a number of Virginia leaders withdrew from the National Baptist Convention and its Foreign Mission Board, and created a new mission group, which they called the Lott Carey Missionary Convention. They received the support of brethren in North Carolina and other adjacent areas.

Almost immediately, all sides in the unfortunate controversy regretted the whole thing. A little statesmanship might have mended the split. But the hurt and anger were still there, and the principals on both sides were sensitive and proud. As a result, the Lott Carey Missionary Convention continued, although extensive co-operation between the groups was inaugurated. Today, the Lott Carey group is chartered as a society, rather than a convention. It conducts excellent missionary programs and has the most cordial relations with the National Baptist Convention. Those on both sides now smile a little ruefully when recalling the rift, and admit that the men of two generations ago should have been more moderate.

For us today, there is a living lesson in the painful experience. The liberal-conservative difference of view will always be with us. And it is a good, not a bad, thing. We need it to be sure that our own thinking does not go stale or get in a rut. Sometimes it makes things very trying and people touchy, but it is so valuable to have the difference of opinion that it is worth exerting our utmost intelligence and patience to try to

keep things together. We can all afford a little humility, whether we be liberal or conservative; the world is simply too complicated for any of us to be able to say that we are always right in every dispute, or that any one approach is always the best. It is often worth a little sacrifice or compromise to be sure that we all stick together.

And it is here that we feel that we would like to gently rap the knuckles of Lewis Jordan for what he did. There is no question that he acted out of the most noble motives, just as the Lott Carey brethren did. But, at a moment when liberal-conservative relations were so strained, he might well have been a little more patient and a little more tactful in the matter of moving the quarters of the Foreign Mission Board. The continued participation of the Virginia brethren was of far more value than the geographical advantages of removing the offices; and he should have realized how much alarm his action would cause.

Of course, along with our little lecture to the departed spirit of this wonderful man, we ought to be sure that the real lesson of the event is not lost on *us*. Today, the liberal-conservative division of opinion on the great issues of the near future can be felt at every convention, and we must hope that we have gained the wisdom not only to live with it, but to respect it and welcome it.

The Publishing Board, whose creation was a factor in the Lott Carey defection, was also to be the center of an even more serious breach, one that reached a showdown in 1915. This was a truly tragic happening that hurt everybody concerned. One of the major goals of conscientious Baptists today should be to heal, once and for all, the breach that took place then. Today, the issues have completely vanished, and thus no longer pose any problem in working out an end to the split. The question now is one of mutual statesmanship for an im-

mensely worthy objective.

This major split among Negro Baptists is a most unusual one in the history of religious groups, in that not a single doctrinal question was involved. All parties professed the same faith, and yet today there are two, not one, National Baptist Conventions. The principal Convention, the lineal descendant of the one founded in 1895, has today over five million members and is an incorporated body. The other one, which broke away in 1915 and bears the name National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated, has about two million members. Reunification of these groups would result in tremendous mutual advantages for both groups.

At the second annual meeting of the National Baptist Convention, it was decided to move ahead full speed in the establishment of a publishing activity. A Publishing Board was established, and placed under the general supervision of the Home Missions Board.

The corresponding secretary of the Home Missions Board was the Reverend R. H. Boyd, one of the most brilliant Negro leaders of his generation. The Reverend Mr. Boyd was a man of great business acumen. He was one of the earliest and most successful Negro bankers.

The Reverend Mr. Boyd, while continuing to hold his position as corresponding secretary of the Home Mission Board, also became corresponding secretary of the Publishing Board.

He moved the focus of his activity to Nashville, Tennessee, and went to work with a will. Among other things, he incorporated the Publishing Board in Tennessee. Its charter did not make mention of any affiliation with the National Baptist Convention. From a legal point of view, it was a separate activity.

The officers of the National Baptist Convention offered no objection to this procedure. If, in fact, they wished to control the Board and retain it as a constituent member of the Con-

vention, they neglected to build the formal legal structure that would have made this possible.

The Reverend Mr. Boyd managed the infant publishing house with spectacular success. The Convention has rarely if ever enjoyed the services of such a remarkable businessman. Since the Publishing Board was a subsidiary of the Home Mission Board, he used the Home Mission Board's state representatives to build the circulation of the fine new material that the Publishing Board was issuing.

The Publishing Board's Sunday school literature and other material were soon being used by many or most Negro Baptist churches. For his part, the Reverend Mr. Boyd used the proceeds to build a new publishing house on a piece of property of which he was the owner. His annual reports to the Convention were a cause for the greatest rejoicing, and the Publishing Board was soon one of the most influential arms of the Convention. By 1905, only nine years after the Reverend Mr. Boyd had launched the activity, it had done an aggregate business of two million four hundred thousand dollars.

Boyd copyrighted the materials in his own name, and the Publishing Board made no attempt to donate any of its proceeds to other activities of the Convention. Apprehension arose among some members of the Convention as it became clear that Boyd regarded the Publishing Board to be the property, not of the National Baptist Convention, but of himself and the other officers of the Tennessee corporation he had created.

This had not been the intention of the National Baptist Convention in creating the Board, but Boyd's legal position was nevertheless secure.

A showdown was forced in 1915. Tardily aware of its neglect of legal procedures, the Convention drew up a new charter clarifying the status of its boards, and asked Boyd to make the Publishing Board's books available to the Con-

vention's auditor. Boyd refused, pointing out with legal correctness that the Convention had no formal claim on his Tennessee corporation.

That brought about the split. Boyd withdrew the Publishing Board from the Convention and made it the nucleus of a new group, the National Baptist Convention, Unincorporated. The National Baptist Convention, Inc., of course continued as the larger and older body, but it was without a publishing board and had to start from scratch to create one all over again.

Boyd, who was truly a master of business and commerce, saw the matter as a simple and clear-cut issue. He had created the corporation, and out of its profits had built its plant on his own land. Its success was the result of his own labor and represented decades of unsparing effort. Proud of his ability, and with a deep personal feeling for the great publishing house that was a monument to his own genius, Boyd resolutely refused to relinquish direction or control to the Convention, even though the Convention felt that it had some claim to exercise control.

For its part, the Convention's embarrassing position was inescapably the result of lack of organizational experience. With little or no prior acquaintance with the subtleties and perils of running a giant enterprise, the Convention's officers had neglected to make sure that their intentions were set forth in the necessary formal documents.

It often happens in human affairs that great things can hang on small points and details. In fact, some people believe that *most* great issues depend on the successful handling of details. This was the intensely painful lesson that the Convention learned through this unexpected turn of affairs.

Today, of course, these old issues sound like ancient history, and leaders in both Conventions have long been discussing the possibility of reunification.

In his address to the Seventy-seventh Annual Session of the National Baptist Convention, Inc., in 1957, President J. H. Jackson made an open plea for reunification. He said:

I would suggest that steps be taken for the union of the two National Baptist Conventions among Negroes. Since we were separated over a publishing house forty-two years ago, it seems in this length of time we ought to have enough grace to overcome the problems of real estate, forgive the blunders of the past, and form one big family of Negro Baptists throughout the nation.

It seems highly likely that this wish will become a reality before too many more years have passed.

Meanwhile, despite these troubles, the National Baptist Convention grew rapidly during the first two decades of its existence. Total membership in churches affiliated with the Convention was about one million when it was launched. In 1905, the figure was two million, and by 1915 it was approaching three million.

In 1899, the Baptist Young People's Union was admitted to the Convention as an additional board. Its purposes were those of general religious education, and its programs rapidly became a mainstay of activity at the local-church level. In recent years it has been absorbed into the Baptist Training Union, providing activities and educational materials for persons of all ages in the church.

In 1900, the Baptist Women's Missionary League was organized, and in 1901 it entered the Convention as the Women's Auxiliary.

In 1903, the Home Mission Board began to extend its program, receiving authorization from the Convention to receive and disburse funds to help bankrupt or needy churches.

In 1905, the Convention received its first substantial recognition in the international church movement, when it sent a full quota of forty delegates to the first meeting of the Baptist World Alliance in London. In 1909, it sent twenty-five delegates to the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in Edinburgh.

In 1906, the Women's Auxiliary, under the secretaryship of the amazing Nannie Burroughs, launched the National Training School for Women and Girls, in Washington, D.C. This project—and the woman who turned it from a dream to a reality—will occupy our attention in another chapter.

In 1913, the Convention already felt old enough to realize that it had a history. A committee was appointed to study the existing records and publish a history of “the story to date.”

The committee dutifully began to look at some records. Among the things they discovered was a picture of the historian of the old American National Baptist Convention, which had been launched by William J. Simmons. The historian, appointed at the very first meeting, was a young teacher at Simmons University named Lucy Wilmot Smith. Lucy may or may not have been a good historian, but there is no doubt that she was one of the prettiest young maidens ever to find a place in the dreary profession of history.

The committee searched diligently, and corresponded with a number of key figures of the old Convention, but their best efforts did not produce a single trace of any historical material ever written or prepared by Lucy. At this late day, no one knows whether Lucy ever wrote any history, or whether, perhaps, she may have had so many invitations to dinner during the conventions that she had no time to write up her notes!

Lewis Jordan, a member of the Commission, chuckled, and put the picture of Lucy in his files. When his great book appeared in 1930, Lucy's picture was right near the front.

This humorous incident highlights a situation that was already becoming serious when the Committee was appointed in 1913, and has become far more serious since then. Written records of the history of the Negro Baptist Church during the period prior to 1900 are scarce. This is something of a tragedy, since the Church played such a great and important role in the rise of the Negro in America. In a special Appendix to this book, Dr. D. C. Washington, corresponding secretary of the Sunday School Publishing Board, has some things to say on this subject that every Baptist should read.

The year 1915, when the two Conventions split, actually marks the end of another era. To keep things straight, let us pass them in review.

First, there were the "very beginnings" during America's colonial days, when the question of providing religious education for Negroes was always a difficult one. However, when the great religious revival came, about 1750, many people answered yes to the question, especially the Baptists and their missionary preachers. This era culminated with the founding of the first Negro Baptist church in America, at Silver Bluff, South Carolina, a year or two before the Revolution.

Then came the "Heroic Age," lasting until about 1830. The first foundations for the Negro Baptist Church were laid by a group of amazing men who overcame every handicap of slavery to perform their work.

This was followed by a reaction, which did not end until the close of the Civil War. The South became increasingly nervous about independent religious activity by Negroes, and most Southern states adopted laws to limit or suppress the religious liberty of Negroes. In the North and West, however, Negro Baptist churches grew and prospered.

The thirty-year period from the close of the Civil War to the founding of the National Baptist Convention was another

period of remarkable growth, marked by the emergence of a new group of "heroic" men. This time, the leaders, although born in slavery, matured in freedom, and most of them were able to secure at least the rudiments of a genuine education. They used it to great advantage in launching effective foreign-mission work and laying the groundwork for the great national convention that finally came into being in 1895.

From 1895 to 1915 the great old leaders stood at the helm of the ship they had launched. It sailed on mightily under the guidance of their strong hands, despite some setbacks arising from easily forgiven pride and lack of thorough administrative knowledge.

We can regard 1915 as another great turning point. From that date on, the Convention begins more and more to take on the appearance and atmosphere of the organization we know today. A new generation begins to move into the positions of key responsibility—a generation for whom slavery was not even a memory, and for whom full citizenship was an easy-to-understand idea.

For example, in 1921, illness forced Lewis Jordan to give up his post. Dr. Morris and Dr. Boyd, the two titans of the 1915 struggle, passed away within two weeks of each other in 1922. Their places were taken by much younger men.

The year 1915, then, was truly "the end of the beginning"—the National Baptist Convention had been firmly established and was ready to play its full role in the dawning day of a new America.

It is hard to leave this era without saying one more word of praise for its wonderful leaders. There were so many of them that the authors of this book have had to make almost cruel choices, and may well have been highly unfair to some of the men whose names have been reluctantly left out. We can only say that we have made the best choices we could in preparing

this “highlight” history. We are comforted by the fact that the interested reader can find complete treatment of other leading personalities in several other books, all of which have been carefully cited in our list of suggested reading. We hope that our book will make you want to read these more detailed works.

And now we have come to the modern era. With each topic we now take up, we can tell the story right up to the moment of the publication of this book.

The first question that must be answered is this: What happened after the Convention lost its publishing house?

The answer, of course, is that it created another one. And what a creation it was! That is the story we must now tell.

CHAPTER VII

A Great Free Press — The New Publishing Board

“On Monday, April 20, 1959, as he was preparing to go to his office, death came to Dr. A. M. Townsend, and forced him to take a merited vacation—one which he had denied himself during his lifetime.”

So reads the opening sentence of a simple and beautiful obituary notice that was published by the Sunday School Publishing Board of the National Baptist Convention. It commemorates the life and service of a man who perhaps came as close to being “indispensable” as any man ever has in the Convention’s history.

For the Sunday School Publishing Board, although a work of many hands and many minds, is in the final analysis a monument to one man’s devotion. That man is Dr. Arthur Melvin Townsend.

Arthur Townsend was born in Winchester, Tennessee, in 1875. His father was a Baptist minister and director of the colored public schools in Winchester.

He attended high school and college at Roger Williams University, graduating as class valedictorian in 1898. He then entered Meharry Medical College, graduating with honors in 1902. The “Dr.” in front of his name stands for a genuine medical degree, rather than an academic degree.

He began the practice of medicine in Nashville and also served as an instructor on the faculty of Meharry Medical College until 1913.

From the beginning his interest in religion had been very

great—an interest that he supplemented with a great natural gift for music. During his student days at Roger Williams and Meharry he served as organist in various Nashville churches. He also conducted Sunday-school classes, and carried out missions to hospitals and jails. As a young physician he became active in the Tennessee Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, becoming its secretary and directing highly successful fund-raising programs.

Joining the Masons, he ultimately rose to the coveted thirty-third degree rank. He was instrumental in building the Masonic Home for the Aged in Nashville, and later securing this property for use by Negroes.

Entering the business world, Townsend was elected cashier of the People's Bank and Trust Company at a time when that institution's financial position was extremely precarious. He was already so well known and so highly regarded in Nashville that his very presence as an officer of the bank pulled it through its crisis, "touching the dead corpse of the bank's credit and bringing it to its feet."

Here, then, was a man who could literally do anything—and do it surpassingly well. The word "genius" is one that must be used carefully. And yet no other word seems proper to describe this unbelievably gifted man. Along with his great intellect went a warm personality and a quick informal wit.

In 1913, Dr. Townsend resigned his lucrative medical practice to accept the presidency of Roger Williams University, a school that many Baptist leaders have called their alma mater. Under his guidance the school secured additional property and built a new administration building and dormitory, while strengthening its financial backing. He was also ordained, and began to preach.

When the National Baptist Convention found itself without a publishing board in 1915, steps were immediately taken to

replace the tragic loss. The Convention was forced to start all over again from scratch. Every mailing list, every desk, every pencil of the old Board was securely in the hands of the Reverend Mr. Boyd when he defected.

Work was immediately begun, and foundations for a new start were laid by S. P. Harris and the Reverend William Haynes, who successively held the corresponding secretaryship for brief periods.

In the 1920 Convention at Indianapolis, leaders from many sections of the country approached Dr. Townsend and asked him if he would be willing to serve as corresponding secretary of the infant publishing board. Dr. Townsend agreed. It was a fortunate day for the National Baptist Convention.

Arriving in Nashville after the Convention, Dr. Townsend found that a start had been made by his two immediate predecessors. Small quarters had been rented and the nucleus of a new staff was at work.

Dr. Townsend launched a great expansion of the existing program. The 1920 Convention had authorized a committee of three prominent persons, headed by Dr. Townsend, to "buy or build a publishing house," but had voted no money to accomplish the object.

Dr. Townsend, however, was able to raise the necessary financing. A large plot of ground was secured a few blocks from the state capitol—by coincidence, a plot of ground that had once been the location of a slave auction.

Dr. Townsend then employed the Negro architectural firm of McKissick and McKissick of Nashville to draw the plans for a great new building.

On May 18, 1924, the cornerstone was laid for the Board's new home, which was to be known as the Morris Memorial Building, in memory of the Convention's first president. The

building was completed and opened for public inspection on October 19, 1925.

The Morris Memorial Building cost \$700,000 to build. Its construction was possible only through the great personal prestige of Dr. Townsend, who was able to find complete financing for the tremendously costly project. Later, the National Baptist Convention made a special drive to liquidate the obligations. The building was refinanced, and now belongs entirely to the Convention.

This building was, at the time of its completion, the most magnificent structure owned by Negroes in the United States, and it probably still is.

Its four floors house a bookstore, a cafeteria, the entire writing, editorial, and production staffs of the Sunday School Publishing Board, and a complete modern printing plant fully capable of handling the giant press runs of the Board's Sunday school and other materials. In his report to the 1958 Convention—the last he was to attend—Dr. Townsend told the members that their great property's assets then totaled more than \$3,100,000, and that its publications for that year showed a profit of \$70,000.

One of Dr. Townsend's first big publication problems was the production of a new hymnal. Fortunately, it was a task for which he and his wife, also highly gifted musically, were especially fitted.

Now, when it comes to music, Negroes have some very special and remarkable problems. Preparing a good hymnal for Negro Baptist churches really sets a difficult task before the compilers.

The problem is that there are at least three main sources of music to draw from, and that Negroes themselves have been divided in their feelings about these sources.

There is, first of all, the great body of standard hymns and religious music as played in churches throughout the English-speaking world. The compiler of a hymnal must know literally thousands of these hymns in order to make a good choice. There are, of course, a number of religious musicologists who are capable of doing this. But the compiler of a Baptist hymnal, in addition to having these standard qualifications, must also have some very vast and special knowledge in at least two other fields where experts are few.

First, there is the question of Negro spirituals. Most competent critics today agree that they constitute one of the greatest bodies of music that has ever been created in the world, and are one of the richest heritages that any group has ever given to its native country.

Now spirituals are a form of folk art arising spontaneously out of the great tragedy of slavery. For some time, no one paid any particular attention to them, and few people thought of them as great music.

It was the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University who first electrified the world by bringing this glorious music into the concert hall. In its early days, Fisk faced the same problem that was faced by all the new institutions for Negro education in the South—a tremendous job to do and almost no money to do it with. In the 1870's, four young students at the university, two boys and two girls, decided to see if it might be possible to earn some money for Fisk by singing the spirituals that were well known to their friends and instructors there.

None of the persons involved in the venture was a well-trained professional musician, but nevertheless this group made history. Triumph followed triumph. After taking America's leading metropolitan concert halls by storm, the group traveled to Europe. There, before hushed audiences, they sang the religious songs of American slavery in halls that were

usually filled with the music of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms. It is said that the crowned heads of Europe who were present wept while the singers performed.

From that time on there was never any question about the musical greatness of the spirituals. But other important problems remained.

First, there is the very special problems that one always encounters with folk art. When things begin to change, people are more interested in new ways than in old ways. We can see it, for example, as it is happening in Africa today. African art, produced by craftsmen with no knowledge of the art of Europe and America, is placed by many art critics among the greatest in the world. As soon as Africans became acquainted with Western civilizations, however, many of them lost interest in their old art, and began imitating Western art forms that are often quite inferior to the work that they used to do!

When this process goes on for a while, people start to think of the old art as crude or inferior, when in fact it is of the greatest quality. It takes time for everyone to get his perspective again, and to see that both the old and the new have valuable things to offer.

For a while Negro spirituals were in this situation. As Negroes began to share fully in American life they came into contact with the great musical heritage of the Western world for the first time, and were thrilled by their new discoveries. Many began to look on the spirituals as "crude" or "old-fashioned music." Those who wanted to preserve the spirituals often found that the ones who knew them best were often the people who had the least interest in them, and the least regard for them as genuine music.

And this suggests yet another problem. The spirituals, when they were first created, were a living part of the life of slavery. When freedom came, they lost that function. Many people

would have been just as happy to forget the whole past—including the music that reminded people of it so strongly. And then, too, an important question arose. Did the old spirituals really have any function or meaning in the church services of today, when Negro life has changed so deeply?

And then—as if there were a need for any more problems—there was one last complication: the problem of the musical settings for the songs. None of the original composers of these songs was even known, and of course it was safe to assume that none of them was a trained musician. In later years, musicians listened to people sing these songs from memory, and wrote them down in musical notation. This early work of writing down the songs was usually done by persons whose own knowledge of music was not really profound. They often tended to miss the real subtlety and greatness of the old songs, and turned them instead into mirror reflections of commercial religious music.

This places an especially hard burden on anyone who wants to create a hymnal in which these songs will shine forth in their true greatness. One has to be a highly trained musician, who, in addition, knows deeply the moving spirit behind these songs through personal experience, can listen with a sensitive ear to the tinny old arrangements made by second-rate musicians, and recapture the magnificent songs that lie behind them, almost completely concealed.

These are the problems that Negro spirituals pose in the compiling of a hymnal for Baptist churches. Still further, a whole additional set of problems is posed by another group of songs—those known as “gospel music.”

Gospel music is a living tradition of the Negro church. It is being created and sung today as enthusiastically as ever. Its special characteristic is its close relation to the great Negro innovations in secular music—blues and jazz.

This presents yet another group of problems! What is the place of *this* kind of music in a standard hymnal? Should it be omitted? Is it great-enough music to merit inclusion? Is it too different from the more traditional church hymns to stand side by side with them in the covers of the official Baptist book of religious song?

As with the spirituals, Negroes have disagreed on this problem too.

We have gone into this somewhat lengthy explanation so that members of the Church can fully appreciate the marvelous book that the Sunday School Publishing Board issues as the Standard Baptist Hymnal. There is no other hymnal like it in any Church anywhere in the world. And behind it lies the shadow of the great man who brought it into being—Dr. Arthur Townsend.

Dr. Townsend believed that spirituals and gospel music *both* deserved an honored place in any hymnal. The decisive issue for him was the simple fact that the best songs in both categories were wonderful and deeply reverent religious music.

With the spirituals, he and his wife, Mrs. Willa A. Townsend, listened to and studied inferior versions of the songs, then prepared new arrangements to rescue the full beauty and meaning of the originals. He felt that the songs were sufficiently beautiful to justify this special and invaluable effort.

Working with a committee appointed by the Convention, he selected the regular hymns, spirituals, and gospel music that were to appear in the Negro Baptists' own book of hymns.

The complete hymnal contained 755 favorite songs, divided into sixty separate departments. Dr. Townsend then supplemented this great achievement by issuing two additional special volumes. One, entitled *Gospel Pearls*, was especially intended for the joyful singing of informal church meetings,

conventions, and gospel meetings. About half this volume consists of old favorites, and half "revival" or gospel music.

The other, entitled *Spirituals Triumphant, Old and New*, placed a heavy emphasis on the traditional spirituals, along with some newer compositions in the spiritual tradition, some of them by Lucie Campbell, the great song composer of the National Baptist Convention. This book contains some songs that are well known and some that are seldom heard. Many of them are in beautiful arrangements by Mr. or Mrs. Townsend.

Each of these two books is unique in its kind, and, together with the hymnal, provide a full selection of great music in the three categories of standard hymns, spirituals, and gospel music. The entire project was imaginatively conceived, and involved tremendous labors. Its fruits are among the outstanding heritage of Convention churches today.

Meanwhile, regular Sunday-school lessons began to be issued, and publication began of the standard magazines and journals that have become so familiar over the years to church members. *The Sunday School Informer*, a journal of religious education for teachers, and the *Star of Hope*, a magazine for women's mission societies in local churches, have been special favorites over the years.

For the minister, *The Baptist Voice* was edited to provide the best in religious journalism and current thinking on problems of the pulpit.

For all these magazines, Dr. Townsend searched the Convention for highly capable editors and for staffs of researchers and writers. Leading ministers and laymen in the Convention received regular invitations to write for the publications, and the Sunday School Publishing Board was soon fulfilling its mission as a great free press, fully worthy of the Convention that created it.

In 1930, the Sunday School Publishing Board issued *Negro Baptist History, U.S.A.*, a large book by Lewis G. Jordan, previously alluded to. This book was actually the culmination of efforts begun in 1913, when the Convention appointed a committee to study its records and prepare a written history.

The book was a monumental undertaking, both for the Board and for Dr. Jordan. Behind it lay years of painstaking study, research, and gathering of documents and photographs.

Its publication was likewise a tremendous undertaking for the Board, and was never envisioned as a profitable one. Its purpose was to make certain that the fruits of Dr. Jordan's work were retained permanently in printed form.

The book is, in many ways, very different from the one you are reading now. It is more a collection of facts and documents than a consecutive narrative, and it lacks professional polish. The very best description of the work is that given by Dr. Jordan himself in his introductory chapter:

The author does not claim to possess the equipment which he believes to be necessary for the efficient historian of today; he frankly confesses deficiency in both breadth and minuteness. Satisfactory conclusions require a wide sweep of such research as is not now possible, but the historian builds up his facts in such a way as the truth may be apparent, and while this writer may not have builded well, he has at least endeavored to build faithfully.

Actually, Dr. Jordan built an edifice that will place every future historian of the Negro Baptist Church, and many students of American life and culture, forever in his debt. In publishing the book, the Sunday School Publishing Board demonstrated another of its priceless advantages—the publica-

tion of important and permanent materials that may not be profitable works, and would perhaps never see the light of print if the Board did not undertake to produce them. In this way, the Sunday School Publishing Board acts as the Convention's "university press," guaranteeing the permanent preservation of things that might otherwise be lost forever.

When Dr. Townsend passed away on April 20, 1959, the Sunday School Publishing Board had become one of the Convention's most successful undertakings, and had also reached the status of one of the world's major religious publishing houses.

Dr. Townsend's successor, who was selected in October, 1959, by a committee of the Convention after careful study, is Dr. D. C. Washington, a native of Alabama and a graduate of Selma University and Alabama State Teacher's College, with thirty-seven years of pastoral experience, and the holder of numerous high denominational and civic offices.

Since Dr. Washington's installation, the Board has issued a handsome brochure entitled *The Inside Story*, describing every phase of the Board's work and operations. The foreword states:

The late Dr. A. M. Townsend, who for nearly two score years directed the work of the Board, left a vigorous institution as a testimonial to his life long work. The Sunday School Publishing Board presently seeks to bring to full fruition the dreams of those who once labored here and have now found rest.

The Board's current program includes a realignment of publications to realize the potential created by Dr. Townsend, and to serve the growing needs of the churches and their members. *The Baptist Layman*, established in 1958, during

Dr. Townsend's lifetime, is growing rapidly and will be continued. *The Sunday School Informer*, a favorite of Baptists, which was published for twenty-six years, has been supplanted by an expanded magazine, *The Baptist Teacher*. *The Star of Hope*, another publication of long standing, was discontinued in 1960 to avoid unnecessary duplication of the fine materials contained in *The Worker*, a quarterly put out by the Women's Convention.

These and other changes and expansions are being made under the guidance of Dr. Jesse Jai McNeil, appointed in 1960 to the new position of Director of Publications. Dr. McNeil, a native of Arkansas, received the degrees of Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Education from Columbia University, attended the Ecumenical Institute in Celigny, Switzerland, and holds a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Virginia Union University. He is a distinguished addition to the Publishing Board's staff, and reflects the continuing policy of securing persons of the highest possible qualifications to assure that the Board's publications will rank with the best of their kind issued by any denomination.

In addition to serving as Director of Publications, Dr. McNeil has become editor of *Baptist Teacher* and of another new publication, *Our Daily Bread*, a quarterly of devotions for personal use.

Few Baptists realize the range and scope of the materials issued by the Board. For example, a review of the publication schedule for the Third Quarter, 1960, shows that the following were among the materials produced by "the presses that never stop":

Pre-School Age Materials: An attractive and colorful selection of lesson materials for this age group, including

1. *For Little Folk at Church*, a source book of stories, prayers and verses, graces and songs for the teacher.

2. Colorful biblical picture post cards for children.
3. Activity kits for children, which include thirteen separate plans and programs to be used during activity periods in church and at home.
4. *Message to Parents*: A quarterly leaflet explaining the experience units prepared for pre-school-age children and giving the parents guidance in helping their children at home.

Primary Sunday School Lessons: A selection of attractive leaflets for religious education at this level, including simple short stories that the children can try to read. Also a set of activity kits for children of this age level, corresponding to the activity kits for tots, mentioned above.

Junior and Intermediate Sunday School Lessons: The series of lessons for this group are presented in conversational style or story form.

Young People's and Adult Bible Quarterlies: The following were issued:

1. *The Senior Bible Quarterly*
2. *Advanced Bible Studies for Older People and Young Adults*
3. *The Adult Bible Quarterly*
4. *The Visitor*
5. A set of thirteen lessons sheets for use at home through the Home Department or at church.
6. *Adult Bible Courses* for use in home or church.
7. A series of courses for young people.

In addition to these Sunday-school materials and home-study-course materials, the schedule included publication of the first issue of *The Baptist Teacher*, the first issue of *Our Daily Bread*, and a series of special units for use in Vacation Church Schools.

It takes an actual list of this kind to convey an adequate

impression of the size and scale of the operation being carried on in the Morris Memorial Building today. One must remember that most of these publications, especially those for children, require special writers with unusual gifts of understanding and communication; a vast editorial operation; an ultra-modern printing establishment; the maintenance of great mailing lists and distribution facilities; and, of course, an elaborate system of production control and accounting.

In order to keep the plant in smooth working order, the Convention recently invested \$200,000 in improvements and modernizations. Important new equipment has been added to make increased production possible.

The Board's continuing interest in the matter of music in Baptist churches is reflected in the presence of J. Robert Bradley, chosen by Dr. Townsend to be the Board's Music Director, who continues to hold that post. Mr. Bradley, like Dr. Townsend himself, is a man with a most unusual combination of qualifications for work in the field. He may very well be the only person in the world who is equally qualified to sing European classical religious music, standard church hymns, Negro spirituals, and modern "gospel songs." Born in Mississippi, and endowed with a magnificent singing voice, Mr. Bradley absorbed during his youth a large repertoire of spirituals and gospel music through direct oral tradition. Later, he spent years in the study of classical music, foreign languages, and voice. He has sung in nearly every major concert hall in America and Europe.

In a typical concert, given late in 1959 in Nashville's War Memorial Auditorium, his songs included the *Te Deum* by George Frederick Handel; the Negro spiritual *Great Gettin' Up Mornin'*; *Heavenly Sunshine*, an original composition by the National Baptist Convention's own Lucie E. Campbell; *There's a King of Kings Somewhere*, a modern gospel song;

and *Amazing Grace*, the great “white spiritual” in the incomparable arrangement by Dr. Townsend. It is doubtful whether any other living singer could have presented a selection of such different types of music and brought the full values of art and authenticity to each.

Mr. Bradley’s great voice may now be heard in his first album of gospel music, issued by Decca. His range of interests and his mastery of so many forms of church music reflect the Convention’s desire to provide the richest possible variety and the highest possible artistic level in its published musical materials.

Another important possession of the Publishing Board is its library. Actually, no one knew just how important or valuable this possession was until 1958.

For many years the Morris Memorial Building had a room on the fourth floor that was called “the library.” It was really only a storage room for miscellaneous books. It was used from time to time by the writers and editors on the Publishing Board’s staff. There was no full-time librarian. If you wanted a book, you simply went into the “library” and poked around, hoping it might turn up in some corner.

With his unerring instinct, Dr. Townsend often used to take old books up to this room and leave them there. It had always been his dream and ambition to create, from the hodge-podge of materials that were rapidly accumulating, a real library and research center.

The year before his death, Dr. Townsend appointed Mrs. H. G. Thompson as full-time resident librarian, and Mrs. L. N. Clark as part-time library consultant. Their job was to wade through the stacks of books and collection of papers in the room on the fourth floor and turn the premises into a real library!

The job took almost two years—and in the process the Pub-

lishing Board discovered that it had a veritable treasure. The two librarians unearthed many rare and precious volumes and documents—a collection that would probably have cut in half Lewis Jordan's research work of several decades ago, and undoubtedly would have made him jump for joy.

The Board is now steadily adding new periodicals and books to the library, and is also busy acquiring additional old and rare volumes and church records whenever they become available.

It is difficult to overestimate the value of such a library. As a matter of simple fact, the Negro Baptist Church has played a role of the greatest importance in the rise and progress of the Negro people of America. Baptist history is American history, in the deepest and truest sense. At the same time, as we have so often seen in the earlier chapters of this book, our existing records are very fragmentary and incomplete.

The Publishing Board's library is in the process of becoming the most important collection of this historical material in the world. When the writing of this book began, one of its authors spent a full month in Nashville, studying documents in the Publishing Board library. Without this library's facilities, the book would not have contained many of the fascinating facts and materials that are included in it.

The library is, of course, primarily intended to serve the editors and writers of the Publishing Board, providing them with a wide range of religious and historical material for the carrying out of their tasks. But it is also open to the public, and its librarians are highly qualified to give expert assistance to students and scholars.

The Sunday School Publishing Board's record has been one of tremendous growth since Dr. Townsend came to Nashville, in 1920. The future holds even more growth—and rapid growth, at that—since the denomination is continuing to in-

crease at an accelerated rate. In building for this future, the Convention and its Publishing Board are working on the basis laid down by Dr. Townsend and his co-workers, who devoted their careers and lives to giving the Convention a great free press. In *The Inside Story*, it is said of Dr. Townsend that he "has left unnumbered lamps, whose glow not only keeps alive the memory of his long life of service to our denomination, but lights the path in which those of us who follow after must tread."

CHAPTER VIII

America's Greatest "Operation Bootstrap"

America's armed forces today have a program dubbed "Operation Bootstrap." It is for young men in the service who deeply want a college education but have never been able to fulfill this dream. Under this program, if the young man has the ability and is willing to work hard enough, Uncle Sam undertakes to do the rest. The young man can actually go to college full time while he wears his uniform.

This program is based on a simple—and very American—idea. The government believes that the better a man's education, the better he will fill his role as soldier and citizen. In short, investment in education is a good investment both for the person and the nation.

There is perhaps no country in the whole world that believes so much in education as America. It fits in with the American dream of "bettering" oneself, of rising in the world, of limitless horizons for progress. Operation Bootstrap is a perfect name. It could easily be used to describe the nation's entire history; its theories about what people ought to do and what they *can* do if they try. The typical American hero is the man who "came from nowhere" and accomplished great things by pulling himself up by his own bootstraps.

Now, the greatest Operation Bootstrap that ever took place in the history of this nation was the education of American Negroes. This story has all the vastness, all the emotional thrill, all the cosmic importance, and all the glory of an epic. It is therefore fascinating to note that the real story

of this achievement has never been written. Some day it will be—perhaps by a Negro Baptist. One thing is certain. No one could possibly be more qualified to do it through closeness of actual association with the mainstream of the story than a Negro Baptist.

The reader will recall that, prior to the Civil War, some Southern states became so alarmed by the independent religious activity of Negroes that they extended their fears to cover any and all educational activities. Some of them passed laws making it a criminal offense to teach reading and writing to slaves.

When freedom came in 1865, most Southern Negroes were completely without even the rudiments of education. We have seen in Lewis Jordan's memoirs that, as a lad of about ten, he arrived in the camp of the Yankee soldiers with no earthly possessions, without the slightest exposure to any kind of education, and without even a name. His first education was received at the hands of the stern but kindly lady missionary who had come to the camp, and who mixed the three R's with the Lord's Prayer and simple religious training. At the end of his memoirs, fourteen years later, we find him entering Roger Williams University, one of the new schools for Negroes that were springing up all over the South.

This tale, duplicated thousands of times over, describes the first great step forward.

Writing about 1900, Booker T. Washington said:

When it is written—and I hope it will be—the part Yankee teachers played in the education of the Negroes immediately after the war will make one of the most thrilling parts of the history of this country.

Actually, we ought to expand Washington's statement a

little. The process, although it began immediately after the war, continued for decades, and is even going on today. And as for the principal actors in the great drama—instead of saying just “Yankee teachers,” we ought to say “Yankees, Southerners, Northern Negroes, and Southern Negroes.” All have played great roles, and, despite many problems and adversities, the record is full of instances of good will and co-operative effort on the part of intelligent people from all four groups.

Continuing our expansion of Washington’s statement, we want to point out that the process really took place in four different stages.

The first stage began with the end of the war—in some instances, even before the end of the war, in those Southern areas that were occupied by Northern troops. In this very first stage, to which Washington was probably referring, it is true that most of the pioneer work was done by dedicated persons from the North, who realized that emancipation was meaningless unless it was accompanied by immediate steps to help the Negro to rise from his condition of ignorance and wretchedness.

In the second stage, the work expanded, and many people of the South joined in the great effort. In this second stage, schools and colleges began to come into being that were really worthy of the name—that is, they were increasingly able to provide genuine education that bore at least some modest resemblance to the educational programs of leading American educational institutions.

In the third stage, the Negro himself began to play a really important role. Graduates from the early schools and colleges began to assume the role of teachers, administrators, and, finally, even presidents and trustees of the colleges. Negroes at this stage even began to found new schools of their own,

and to make significant financial contributions to the maintenance and enlargement of existing schools.

Now, with regard to these first three steps a few general comments are in order. First, they naturally overlapped, and, after the very beginning, we begin to see all these things happening here and there on the scene. It is all a question of *emphasis*. Let us say, just to set some arbitrary dates, that the first stage covered about the first five years of freedom, until 1870, when things began to move rather decisively into the second stage. And let us say that by 1880 we begin to find increasing evidence that we are entering the third stage of significant Negro participation in the process. By that date Northern whites, Southern whites, Northern Negroes, and Southern Negroes, are all active in this tremendous Operation Bootstrap. As time goes on, the participation of Northern and Southern Negroes grows very substantially; as more Negroes become educated, they take on an increasing share of the great effort.

And now, one more final—and tremendously important—fact about all of these first three stages. *By far the greatest burden of the effort was borne by churches, church groups, and church associations.* It was the churches that sent out the teachers as part of their home-missions programs, and it was through the churches that the greatest share of the money was raised. *Among these churches, none played a greater role than the Baptist churches.* And, as we move on into the third stage, *no Negro church played a greater role than the Negro Baptist Church.*

Now we can see the true meaning of this great story. It comes to this—that during this Operation Bootstrap, the Baptist Church in general and the Negro Baptist Church in particular made a contribution to the history of America that is beyond all calculation. This contribution has received less

attention than almost any other event of equal importance in the annals of our country.

The authors, reviewing this marvelous story as it emerged from the old books and documents in the library of the Sunday School Publishing Board, felt a deep desire to tell the tale in extended form, proving by the citation of case after case the decisive role played by white and Negro Baptists both in the civic and in the religious uplift of the American Negro through education. Space, of course, rules against this. We are forced to use "typical examples" to show what happened. But we cannot leave the topic without suggesting to some other historian in the ranks of the five million members of the Convention that this story needs to be told more fully, and would make a thrilling book all its own.

Before taking up the actual story, we want to mention briefly the fourth stage of development in this field. This is the stage in which we find ourselves today. It is the stage of "the great breakthrough." Educational facilities are now becoming increasingly available to all Americans of all racial backgrounds. This poses important questions about the future of Negro education, and of the numerous tiny schools set up during the first three stages of the great saga to provide education for Negroes that was simply unavailable elsewhere when they were founded. It also poses important problems for the National Baptist Convention, for its Educational and Home Mission Boards, for its Baptist Training Union Board, for all the State Conventions, for individual Baptist churches—all of which have been deeply involved in the tremendous effort to support both religious and secular education for Negroes. Because Baptists have played such a great role in this Operation Bootstrap, they cannot avoid studying these great new tides and their meaning. It is a matter for the consideration and concern of every church member to make

the programs of the churches and the Convention of maximum value in this great new time of change.

But to return now to the very beginning of our story—to the end of the Civil War, to the days when Lewis Jordan and the other future leaders of the National Baptist Convention were runaway children in a strange new world, to the days when the first phase of the great Operation Bootstrap was about to begin.

In the North, responsible members of the abolitionist movement began to think about this question before the shooting had stopped. So had the great churches, especially the Baptist churches, where the tradition of freedom was so strong, and where the commitment to freedom for the Negro had frequently been so deep. And so had the church conventions, especially the American Baptist Home Mission Society.

But instead of looking at the work and thoughts of great societies and conventions, let us look instead at the life and fortunes of a single private in the Union Army, a young man named Henry Martin Tupper.

He was a man born of humble but sturdy New England stock, in the small town of Monson, Massachusetts. He somehow neglected to leave us any record of the date of his birth, but it was sometime between 1835 and 1840. His parents were not professing Christians, and as a boy he never attended church or Sunday school.

As a teen-ager he attended Monson Academy, a tiny school in his home town, to prepare for college. There he learned of the Baptist faith, admired it deeply, and was converted.

His family had little money; during the summer he earned small sums as a teacher in New Jersey. One Saturday afternoon, he walked twenty miles to the nearest Baptist church in a New Jersey town, and asked to be baptized.

He went on to Amherst College, graduated in 1859, and

decided on theological training. He entered Newton Theological Seminary (now Colby College), and graduated in 1862.

That summer the Army of the Potomac issued a call for volunteers. Deeply committed to the moral purposes of the war, Tupper decided to join. Neither he nor his family had any "connections"; he therefore joined as a private soldier. Before leaving for the field he was ordained.

As a rifleman, he saw the Civil War strictly from the front lines, almost miraculously surviving three years of the most intense battle action. He was at South Mountain. He was at Antietam. He was at Fredericksburg. He was at Vicksburg. He was a member of General Sherman's raiding party at Jackson. His closest call came at Vicksburg, where a shell burst near him, causing flash burns.

Although a remarkably brave fighting soldier, Tupper also carried out impromptu religious work ceaselessly among his battle comrades, to whose needs he ministered. He held informal meetings in the camps and trenches, where many came to hear his modest sermons. He wrote letters for the sick. Sometimes he found himself fulfilling the many duties that we associate today with commissioned chaplains.

In the spring of 1865, having rendered magnificent and distinguished service, he was released from the Army. His rank at the time of discharge: private!

Tupper did nothing to advertise himself, but the reputation of the young "Reverend Private" apparently reached some very influential ears.

His real reward for what he did in the Army came a few weeks later. A letter arrived from the American Baptist Home Mission Society, offering to commission him as a missionary for work among the newly freed Negroes, and permitting him to select his own area of operations.

Henry Tupper, good soldier, accepted the commission happily.

With his wife—and the modest man has neglected to tell us when he acquired her!—he started out for Raleigh, North Carolina. It was a train ride so slow that even a modern commuter would have gotten restless. The ride from Massachusetts took a full week! Actually, he was traveling on the first train that passed over the Seaboard Railroad since the war. The train was forced to stop time after time because of breakdowns or shell holes in the right of way.

In Raleigh, he looked around, then wrote a letter to the Home Mission Society. "The condition of the colored people," he said, "is pitiable."

Many of them had no homes, no food, no clothing. The Home Mission Society sent some money. He wrote to the Freedman's Bureau of the Federal Government, which sent food and clothing.

As always, he provided for religious services in the midst of the struggle. On February 17, 1866, he organized some of the converted and baptized freedmen into a Baptist church. The next month, he took title to a small plot of land on which to build a church, paying for it by using the entire savings that he had accumulated from his private's pay during his three years in the Army.

In March, he and his parishioners began to hew down trees to build the church. The timbers had to be carried five miles. The building was ready for use within a year, although it was not completed for five years.

Tupper wrote to some friends and relatives in Massachusetts, describing his work and asking if they could spare a little money to contribute to it. People in Monson and nearby Wales, Massachusetts, were soon talking about what young Henry was doing in Raleigh. Contributions began to arrive.

As soon as the building was ready, Tupper established not only regular religious services, but also regular school sessions. The Freedman's Aid Society of New England sent several teachers. The American Baptist Home Mission Society, deeply impressed, increased its support.

Students began to arrive from Raleigh and vicinity. Soon they began to come from neighboring counties. Scratching for funds, and receiving still more support from the American Baptist Home Mission Society, Tupper and his students erected crude dormitories. The Freedman's Aid Society sent him twenty-five cents a month for every student he enrolled. The Peabody Fund, a foundation that had heard of his work, sent him the same amount. It helped to pay for the food.

Tupper, from the very beginning, offered theological courses, while the Freedman's Aid Society teachers drilled the students in the three R's. Students were now flocking to the school. Tupper began his recitations at seven o'clock in the morning and taught until five in the afternoon, with an hour out for lunch. Then he taught classes during the evening.

The young Negro students worked as hard as Tupper did. Every lesson, every book, every hour was the passport to a new life.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society was deeply pleased, and more impressed than ever. In the spring of 1870, Tupper and his students had a distinguished guest—Dr. J. B. Simmons, the Society's secretary and chief executive.

Simmons sat down with Tupper and had a long talk with him.

The Society, he said, would do all it could to back him if he was interested in building his school into a really substantial institution of higher learning for Negroes in Raleigh.

Tupper was, of course, willing. Things moved slowly but

surely. An excellent property was finally purchased for \$13,000. The American Baptist Home Mission Society could not afford to foot the bill, but it agreed to pay Tupper's expenses if he wanted to come north on a speaking tour to try to raise the money.

Tupper came north. The voice of the simple ex-Union soldier was heard in Baptist churches and in homes of wealthy Baptists. The sum was raised in six weeks.

In the spring of 1878, Tupper and his students erected a crude kiln on the property and began to bake bricks for the construction of the first building. They baked enough bricks to build the structure, and a large quantity of extra bricks to sell commercially. These netted nearly \$4,000, which was applied to the building costs.

The next project was a separate dormitory for women students, whom Tupper had been receiving along with men almost from the beginning. A wealthy man in Brattleboro, Vermont, donated \$8,000 to build it.

Next came the chapel and dining hall. Then another New England donor offered \$5,000 as a start toward a medical school if Tupper could match the sum with other contributions. Again the American Baptist Home Mission Society paid his expenses for a fund-raising trip north. He raised the matching sum in less than three weeks. He then turned to the North Carolina Legislature, and asked that body if it would pay for the purchase of a suitable site on which to build the school. The request was voted without a murmur.

Tupper's school, which began in 1867 in a log-cabin Negro Baptist church, had become Shaw University.

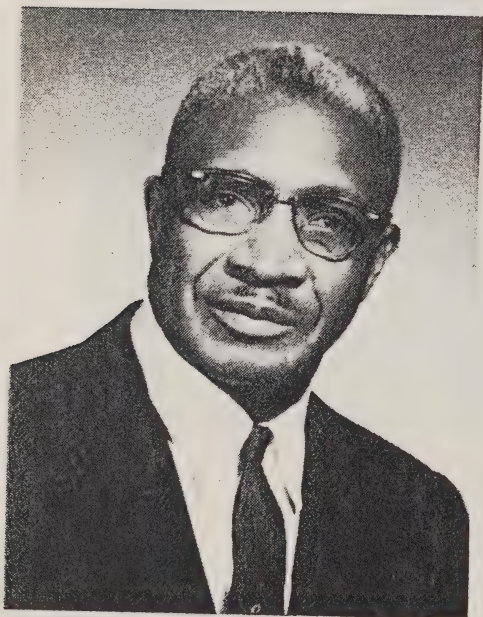
New buildings continued to go up—none of them fancy, but all of them serviceable. A small hospital, a laundry, and a workshop were added. By 1885, the University's holdings were valued at \$200,000.



The Rev. Dr. J. H. Jackson
President, National Baptist Convention
1953-



Maynard P. Turner, Jr.
President, American Baptist Theological
Seminary



The Rev. Dr. Charles P. Harris, Corre-
sponding Secretary, Home Mission Board.



A typical "freedman's shanty" of the early Reconstruction era. It was from surroundings such as this that many of the National Baptist Convention's greatest leaders came.



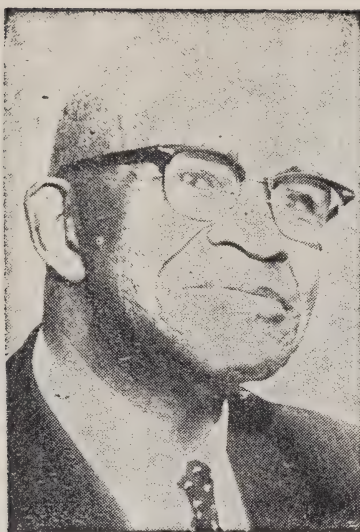
THE FIRST NEGRO BAPTIST CHURCH BUILDING IN AMERICA. This wooden structure was erected in 1794 to house the congregation of the First African Baptist Church, Savannah, Georgia. The story is told in Chapter 3.

Rev. William W. Colley, one of the key figures in the organization of the National Baptist Convention, whose work is described in Chapter 5. He was also first Corresponding Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board. He died in 1909.



Birthplace of the National Baptist Convention. The First Baptist Church of Montgomery, Alabama, where Rev. W. W. Colley convened the organizing meeting of the Foreign Mission Convention in 1880. This Convention was the direct predecessor of both the Foreign Mission Board and the National Baptist Convention, which came into being 15 years later.





The Rev. Dr. C. C. Adams, Corresponding Secretary, Foreign Mission Board, since 1941.

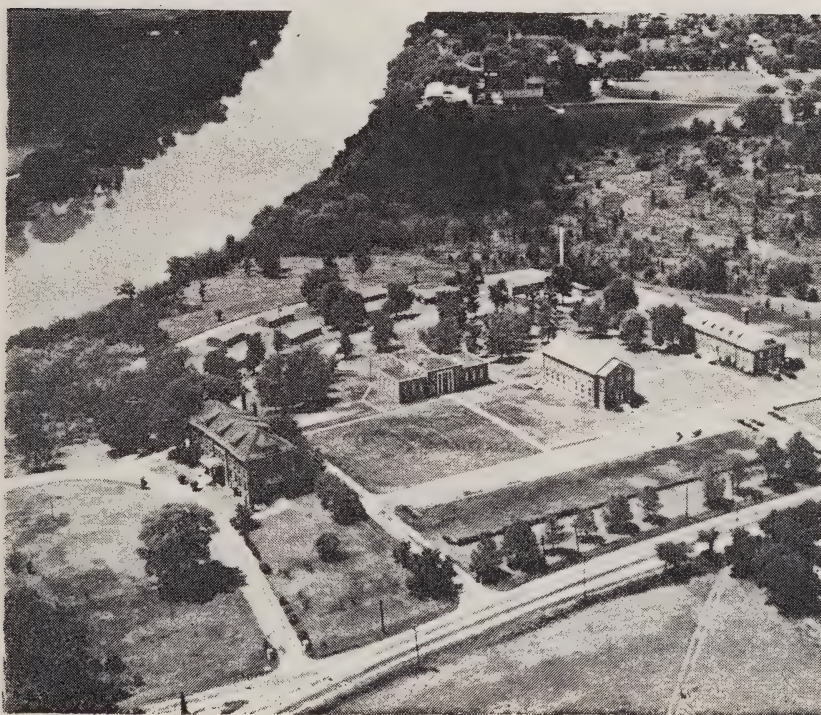


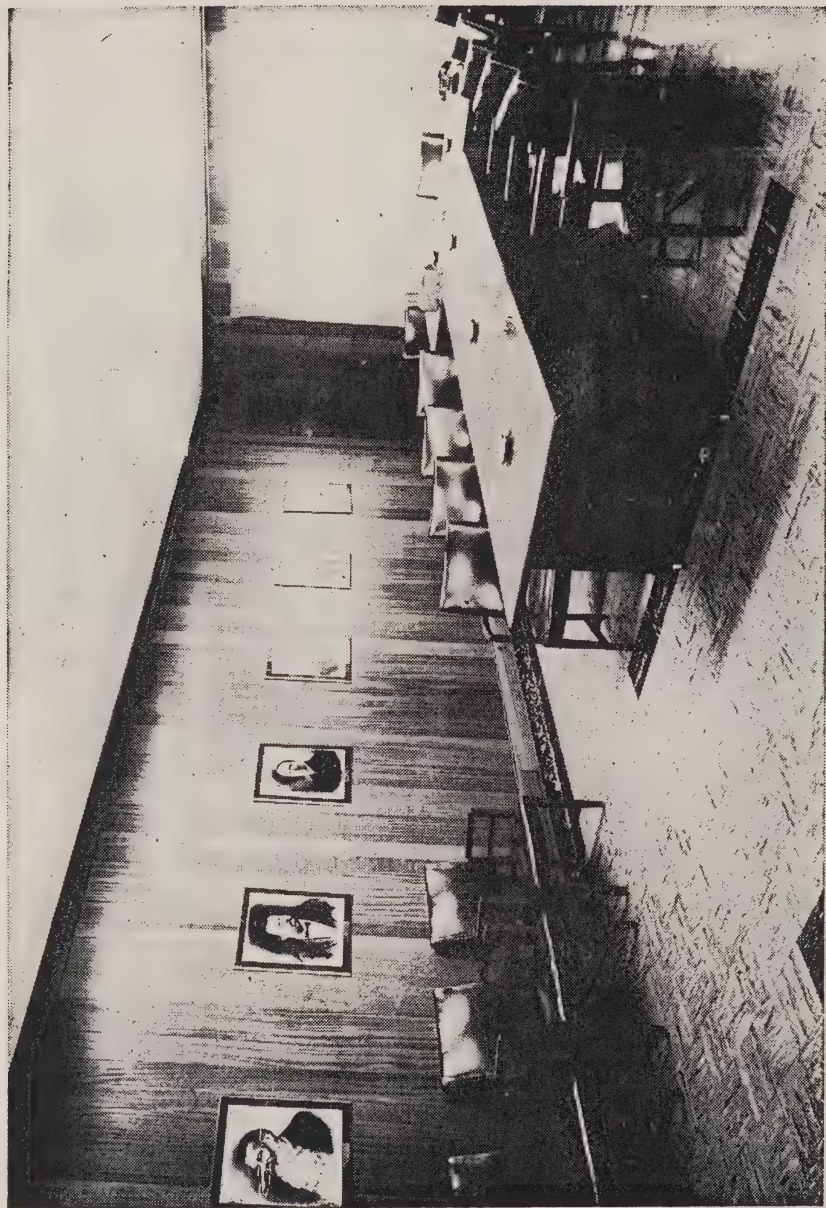
The Carrie V. Dyer Memorial Hospital, Monrovia, Liberia — one of the Foreign Mission Board's important projects in Africa.



American Baptist Theological Seminary Trustee Board
in Annual Session

Aerial View of American Baptist Theological Seminary





Conference Room, Foreign Mission Board,
Philadelphia, Pa.



An early leader in the Convention. Rev. J. M. Armstead was first recording secretary of the unified National Baptist Convention. He was also President of the Virginia Baptist Convention for 14 years, and served as Pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Portsmouth, Virginia for 43 years until his death in 1929.



The Rev. Dr. Arthur M. Townsen Corresponding Secretary of the Sunday School Publishing Board from 1920 to 1959. Under his direction the new Board was brought to full activity after the old board defected from the Convention in 1915, and the Morris Memorial Building was planned and built to house the publishing activities.



The Rev. Aaron Barbour, pastor of the Macedonia Baptist Church, Galveston, Texas, for 33 years who died in 1921. His career and his family's experience exemplify the role that the Baptist Church played in the rise of the Negro and his increasing participation in American life. As a young man he entered the ministry and became greatly interested in the education and advancement of Negroes. Of his four children, one became a well-known lawyer, two became ministers, and his only daughter became a teacher.

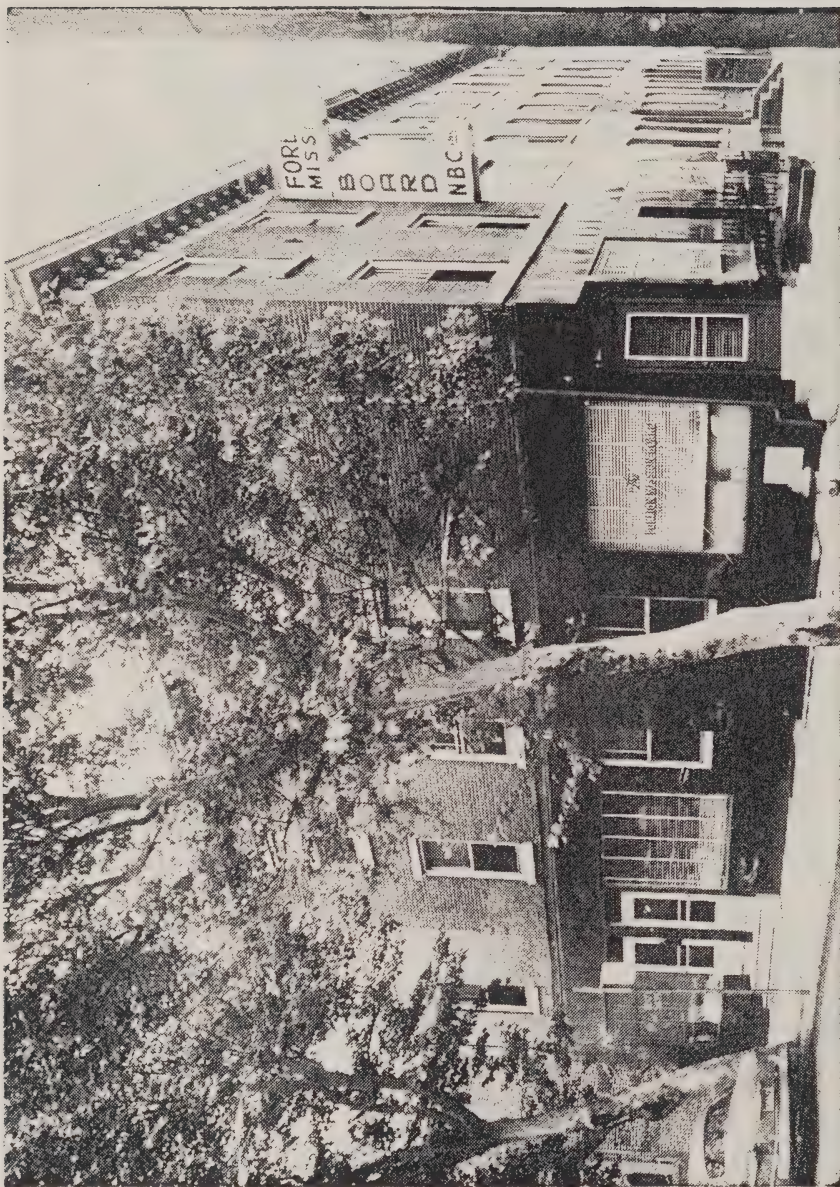


A remarkable composite photograph made in 1875, is now in the archives of the Sunday School Publishing Board. These ministers were leaders in the movement that brought the National Baptist Convention into being. They are identified as follows:

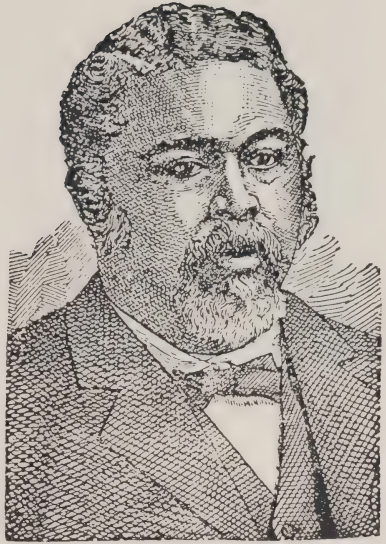


T. L. Holcomb Memorial Library, American Baptist Theological Seminary, Nashville, Tennessee. This \$115,000 structure was dedicated April 14, 1954. It will house 50,000 volumes and has a seating capacity of 300.

1. S. P. Young; 2. Thomas Huffman; 3. W. J. Smith; 4. John Johnson; 5. John Morgan; 6. Henry Wathen; 7. John Thompson; 8. Alex Hamilton; 9. A. G. Graves; 10. E. D. D. Walker; 11. A. Taylor; 12. A. McKee; 13. R. Lee; 14. E. J. Anderson; 15. Frank Hinton; 16. H. Davis; 17. W. M. Miller; 18. C. Oldham; 19. L. Smith; 20. Isaac Slaughter; 21. J. M. Harris; 22. C. Stumm; 23. Sam'l Mack; 24. A. Ferguson; 25. W. B. Blackburn; 26. W. Lewis; 27. John P. Wills; 28. Simon Grigsby; 29. Allen Allensworth; 30. Eugene Evans; 31. P. Johnson; 32. S. P. Lewis; 33. P. Obannon; 34. W. C. Dabney; 35. E. W. Green; 36. G. W. Dupee; 37. Q. B. Jones; 38. M. Harding; 39. R. Martin, Jr.; 40. Geo. W. Bolling; 41. S. Q. Goodloe; 42. J. F. Thomas; 43. W. W. Taylor; 44. D. A. Gaddie; 45. M. M. Bell; 46. John Vinegar; 47. M. Campbell; 48. Philip Alexander; 49. J. K. Polk; 50. G. W. Brown; 51. Daniel Martin; 52. Daniel Martin; 53. John Reed; 54. A. Stratton; 55. N. A. Walker; 56. E. P. Marrs; 57. H. Curd; 58. H. Mayfield; 59. J. C. Harison; 60. W. Fisher; 61. Henry Fry; 62. Chas. Fishback; 63. Louis Lewis; 64. Chas. Bates; 65. Richard Jones; 66. Reuben Strauss; 67. W. J. Brown; 68. J. Moran; 69. A. J. Green; 70. Lewis Overall; 71. Robinson Owsley.



Headquarters Building of the Foreign Mission Board,
Philadelphia, Pa.





Miss Lucy Wilmot Smith of Louisville, Kentucky, who was elected first historian of the American National Baptist Convention in 1880. This is the photograph discovered by Lewis G. Jordan in an old file, as described in Chapter 5, and is now preserved in the archives of the Sunday School Publishing Board.



Rev. W. W. Colley and Rev. J. H. Presley with their wives, shortly before they sailed to Liberia as the first foreign missionaries of the Foreign Mission Convention in 1883. Mrs. Presley and her newborn baby died in Liberia in 1885 of tropical fever. This touching photograph is from the files of the Foreign Mission Board, which took over the work of the Foreign Mission Convention in 1895.



Born in slavery, Rev. H. W. Bowen is typical of the many Negro Baptist ministers who were born slaves, and whose long careers extended to our own era. He was born in Mississippi in 1862 and died in Chicago in 1928. He pastored many leading churches in Mississippi and was long-term president of the Mississippi State Convention.



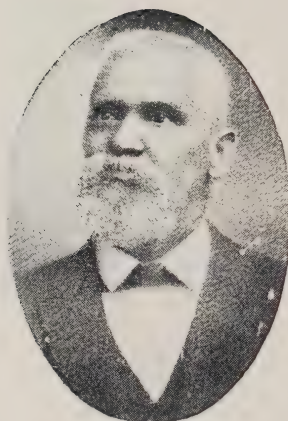
Rev. T. J. Searcy, a typical minister from the first generation of Negro Baptists who were able to obtain a higher education. Searcy went to Roger Williams University in 1874. He was a classmate of Lewis G. Jordan, who was to become an important figure in the National Baptist Convention in succeeding decades. Jordan says of Searcy, "Together we made the bread for the University to help ourselves through school." Searcy became pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn.



A typical pioneer Negro Baptist minister of the Reconstruction Era. This is Rev. W. W. Hay, pastor of Mt. Gilead Church, Fort Worth, Texas. The rare woodcut is typical of the many treasures of Baptist history that are preserved in the archives of the Sunday School Publishing Board.



Reaching into many fields. The Rev. Granville L. P. Taliaferro was minister of Holy Trinity Baptist Church, Philadelphia, for a number of years before his death in 1916. A man of many interests, Rev. Taliaferro typified the increasing participation in American life that Negroes were beginning to experience in his generation. He owned and edited "The Christian Banner," a well-known magazine. He also founded the Banner Publishing Company, the Banner Real Estate Company, and the Northern Aid Society, an insurance company, and was the only Negro on the Board of Directors of Republic Trust Company.



Rev. W. H. McAlpine, First President of the National Baptist Convention. He served two terms and declined a third. He was also founder of Selma University, and served for several years as its president.



A famous Negro Evangelist. Rev. I. Tolliver of Liberty Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., was one of best-known of American evangelists around the turn of the century.

Now the problem was to raise the University's standards. It could no longer give grammar-school education and training. New secondary schools had to be founded in nearby areas, to prepare students for Shaw.

One June day in 1882, after commencement, Tupper approached a particularly bright young man who had just received his diploma, and asked him to go to Winton, North Carolina, to find out whether it was a suitable location for the establishment of a secondary school that could serve as a feeder for Shaw.

The young man went, and was greatly discouraged by what he found. He came back and told Tupper that the colored people there were without education or religious training, that the white people were not in favor of educating them, and that the community was isolated and undesirable.

The old soldier listened quietly to this tale of woe, and then looked the young graduate in the eye. Taking a ten-dollar bill out of his pocket, he handed it to the young man, saying, "I want you to go to Winton and start a school with this money."

"It was the greatest lesson of my life," the young man said, years later. He was the Reverend C. S. Brown, doctor of divinity, and founder of Waters Institute in Winton, North Carolina.

On November 12, 1892, Henry Martin Tupper, only in his fifties but with all his human strength and energy spent on the work to which he had devoted his life, passed away to his reward. Four days before his death he asked the doctor how long he had to live. "A short time," the doctor replied. He then asked that the faculty of Shaw University—many of them Negroes who had been educated there—be called to his sick-room. They came in silently. He looked around at their faces, and smiled.

"I have gained the victory," he whispered.

A similar story lies behind the founding of many, or most, of the schools, large and small, that sprang up throughout the South after the Civil War. Coleman College, Roger Williams University, Hartshorne Memorial College, Richland Theological Seminary and Wayland Seminary (later to be consolidated into Virginia Union University), Spelman, Morehouse, Jackson College—these and so many others, which have contributed so many leaders to the Negro Baptist Church and the National Baptist Convention, all have stories of this kind to tell about their founding and early days.

The story of the Reverend Mr. Tupper and Shaw University carried us through all of the first three stages of Operation Bootstrap in the post-Civil War South—the first period of initiative by the Northern Baptist Church, the second period of joint Northern-Southern participation and the establishment of genuine institutions of learning with modest but highly serviceable facilities, and the third period of increasing Negro participation as the schools began to produce eager young graduates.

The participation of Negro Baptists and the Negro Baptist Church had begun even before the Reverend Mr. Tupper had placed the ten-dollar bill in the hand of young Brown. Many of the first generation of Negro leaders received their education immediately after the Civil War, and a few leaders from the North had been fortunate enough to receive educations before or during the conflict. Such men became active in the great educational effort at an early date.

Take, for example, the Reverend W. M. McAlpine. He was born in Buckingham County, Virginia, in June, 1847. When he was three years old he, his mother, and his younger brother were spirited off to Alabama and sold by a slave trader to a Presbyterian minister named Robert McAlpine.

His owner died and he became the property of McAlpine's son, a physician, whose wife saw to it that the young man learned to read and write and acquired a knowledge of arithmetic, grammar, and geography. It was a rare stroke of good fortune for a slave child.

In 1864, again under the sponsorship of the doctor and his wife, McAlpine was converted and accepted into the fellowship of the white Baptist Church at Talladega, Alabama.

His education at that point was limited, but nevertheless surpassed that of most Negroes, and in 1866 he became a teacher in a school at Mardisville, about five miles from Talladega. That winter he began studies at newly created Talladega College, working mornings, evenings, and week ends to make ends meet.

McAlpine was licensed to preach in 1869 and ordained in 1871, while he was still a student at Talladega.

In 1873, he attended the first meeting of the Colored Baptist Missionary State Convention. There he offered a resolution to establish a school for the colored Baptists of Alabama, to be sponsored and at least partly supported by the Convention and the Negro Baptist churches of the state. The resolution was favorably received, and of course reflected the wishes and even the longings of the Convention, but there was little or no money in sight.

The next year, McAlpine was elected the Convention's agent, and in this capacity set about to find the funds to turn his resolution into a reality. He was remarkably successful, and by 1877 he had raised enough money to take the matter out of the talking stage.

The Convention, meeting in the fall of that year, decided to buy the old fair grounds at Selma, Alabama, which were available at a modest price, as the site for the school. It was done; and, as at Shaw University, students cut logs and baked

bricks between their classes, in order to put up the first structures.

In 1881, the school was a thriving concern; it was named Selma University, and McAlpine, who had worked unstintingly for eight years to bring it into being, was appointed its first president. He held the position for two years, but then resigned it because he felt it very important that a "really educated man" should hold the position. McAlpine lacked even a B.A.; because of inescapable financial pressures, he had been forced to leave Talladega College when he was six months short of graduation.

It is interesting to note that McAlpine became a figure of increasing importance in Baptist affairs, and retained to the end his fascination with learning. When the Reverend Mr. Colley organized the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1880, and was elected its first corresponding secretary (see Chapter V), McAlpine was elected president, and served two terms. This places him securely in the history of the pioneer movement that produced the National Baptist Convention in 1895.

The Reverend Mr. McAlpine, although his own view of his educational attainments was modest, was well known and greatly respected both in religious and in civic circles for his founding of Selma University. He was regarded as an "educator"—a title that would have thrilled him, but to which he hardly felt that he was entitled. He was nevertheless invited by the Board of Trustees of Lincoln Normal University, at Marion, Alabama, which was composed entirely of white civic leaders, to become a member of the Board. He served on the Board for six years as its only Negro member.

In rapid succession, other pioneers of the National Baptist Convention movement assumed leadership and positions of top-executive responsibility in the great Operation Bootstrap.

We noted in Chapter V that, in 1880, the Reverend William J. Simmons became president of the Normal and Theological Institute of Louisville, later to be known as Simmons University. We also saw that the Reverend E. C. Morris, who was to become the first president of the National Convention, in 1895, and remain at the organization's helm for twenty-eight years, founded Arkansas Baptist College, in 1884—a school controlled entirely by the Negro Baptist State Convention of Arkansas.

By the time the Convention came into being in 1895, Negro Baptists were playing a large role as teachers and educators in the many new schools, and Negro churches and state conventions were making an important contribution to the financing of many schools—especially the smaller ones that, neglected by the “big donors,” often relied almost entirely on the efforts of local Baptist churches and little county-wide Baptist associations. Churches and the smaller associations also made small sums of money available for scholarship purposes. These sums were often not formally announced as being available for the purpose. It was a simple question of listening to the problems of desperately needy students, and supplying the twenty-five, fifty, or one hundred dollars that might often mean the difference between education and no education.

As for the Convention, it was inevitable that it should soon find itself involved in formal educational ventures. Within a few years after the 1895 Convention, at least one project of really lasting importance was under way, thanks to a woman who has since become a national figure, and is one of the most colorful leaders ever produced by the Convention or any other religious body in America.

Nannie H. Burroughs was born in Orange County, Virginia. She has never given the exact date, but it is certain that she

was in the full bloom of her very early youth when she dropped her bombshell into the 1901 session of the National Baptist Convention. The little girl with the big new ideas was undoubtedly the prettiest officer seen at any Baptist Convention since William J. Simmons had picked Lucy Wilmot Smith to be historian of the American National Baptist Convention, in 1886. But if anybody thought that her lovely appearance went along with a shy, retiring personality, he was thoroughly wrong.

Miss Burroughs had been serving as bookkeeper, stenographer, and editorial secretary in the offices of the Foreign Mission Board in Louisville, when the Women's Missionary League was organized, in 1900. She immediately became intensely active in this group, corresponding with its leaders and making many suggestions for programs.

At the 1901 Convention, the group entered the National Baptist Convention as the Women's Auxiliary. Dynamic young Nannie Burroughs was elected Corresponding Secretary.

In her maiden speech to the assembled leaders of the Negro Baptist Church in America, she rocked everybody by suggesting that the Convention create a special training school and educational institution for Negro women.

It was certainly an interesting idea, but nobody took it too seriously. Everyone, however, was impressed by the power and vigor of this young spokesman for Negro Baptist women.

Miss Burroughs, however, was not talking to hear herself speak. In subsequent conventions she raised the issue again, and pushed hard for its acceptance. She insisted that funds could be raised and that the Convention would not be obligated if it was unable to make substantial contributions.

Meanwhile, Miss Burroughs was proving her own fund-raising prowess. The Women's Auxiliary, which had fifteen dollars when she took over in 1901, was operating on a

\$13,000 budget five years later, and continued to increase its budget sharply with each succeeding year.

The Convention and Women's Auxiliary decided to give her a green light, with the understanding that she would be responsible for the venture's success. Jubilantly, Miss Burroughs secured, for \$6,000, a fine tract of land in Lincoln Heights, overlooking Washington, D. C., and containing on its premises a single building—a large old frame house.

The dauntless young officer promptly went before the 1907 Convention, announced the purchase, and asked help in raising \$50,000 to put up buildings and launch a fullfledged school!

The Convention was in no position to provide such a sum, and Nannie Burroughs went to work to raise the funds herself. She scorned the advice of "wise old men" who told her that unless she could get "wealthy white donors" her effort was doomed. She traveled through the length and breadth of the National Baptist Convention, pleading her cause and collecting small sums.

She also sharply disagreed with the advice of many prominent leaders, including Booker T. Washington, who told her that the nation's capital was a poor location for the school.

"I wish," said Washington in a letter to her, "that your school was not in Washington."

This senior statesman of Negro education doubted that Washington Negroes would be interested in it or would give support to it, and suggested that the capital city was not in the center of the area where great Negro problems of the near future would be raised and decided.

Nannie Burroughs saw around this corner of history much more clearly than Booker T. Washington and most other Negro leaders of the time. She foresaw that the so-called border states were going to be tremendously influential in the movement toward Negro progress, and further argued that hap-

penings in the District of Columbia would one day be among the most important of any in the country in the field of race relations.

As for the argument that "big money" could be raised only for projects that were physically located in the Deep South, she scoffed at this because of her proved ability to raise it among Negro women themselves. She felt certain—and the event proved her entirely correct—that if the project was successful, wealthy donors wouldn't care where it was located.

The school opened in 1909 with Nannie Burroughs as president. It had five adventurous assistants and eight pupils. Total enrollment at the conclusion of the first year was thirty-one.

The record since then has been one of triumph after triumph for Nannie Burroughs and her remarkable school. Her indefatigable fund-raising efforts have been matched by private contributions as the school has attained a nation-wide reputation. The magnificent campus, which lay in a rural area when Miss Burroughs acquired it for the Women's Convention in 1907, is today situated in the heart of one of Washington's finest suburban areas. The school has seven major buildings, including a new dormitory completed in 1956 at a cost of \$200,000.

At its inception, Miss Burroughs envisioned the school as a place where Negro women could learn a valuable trade, which would prevent them from being at the mercy of chance on the labor market. As conditions in America have changed, the school has expanded its concepts and its curriculum to meet the new needs. Its unwavering emphasis continues to be on producing graduates who can take care of themselves professionally, but its curriculum has reflected an ever broadening range of subject matter.

The school is now known as the National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls, and it holds full accreditation as a private high school and junior college. Subjects taught include English, Spanish, World History, Mathematics, Sociology, General Science, a selection of business courses, Christian Missions, Social Service, Public Speaking, and Music.

Nannie Burroughs retained her dual role as president of the Women's Auxiliary and president of the School until 1920, when the burden of the two positions became too much even for her inexhaustible energies. She then resigned the presidency of the Women's Convention to devote her full time to the School. When she left, the Auxiliary's annual budget had grown to \$50,000, and was still on its way up.

The catalogue of the National Trade and Professional School bears on every page the indelible imprint of the unique personality who brought it into being. It states, for example: "We do not accept students who smoke, drink, wear slacks, use unbecoming language, or are morally lax."

On the subject of "Character," the catalogue warns sternly, "We accept only those young women who are determined to become capable leaders in their chosen fields." Nannie Burroughs, one of the most indomitable leaders of our generation, wants students who feel at least some kinship to her in terms of serious purpose and high aspirations.

Elsewhere, the catalogue says: "We urge parents not to send their daughters too much money for incidental expenses. It is bad training in the use of money."

The catalogue also warns the prospective student and her parents, "*Do not bring finery*. Parents should not send clothing in response to letters from their daughters. See that their actual needs are supplied before they leave home and do not send any more clothing unless notified by the dean."

Behind these firm precepts and old-fashioned rules of propriety lie the firm beliefs of a woman who knows that a strong feeling of purpose and a fair share of self-denial lie behind every serious effort to build a successful life.

Meanwhile, Negro Baptist support of education grew tremendously as the twentieth century progressed, and the Convention itself began to reflect seriously on the problem of preparing a sufficient number of really well-trained ministers to occupy its pulpits.

In Nashville, Tennessee, the 1913 Session of the Convention appointed a committee to confer with a similar committee of the Southern Baptist Convention on the possibility of establishing a theological seminary for the express purpose of providing graduates of the very highest quality for the Negro Baptist ministry.

Extended conferences followed, which finally bore fruit with the opening of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee, on May 6, 1924.

The Seminary is run under a unique co-operative arrangement. The National Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention have set up a special corporation to conduct the school. The National Baptist Convention elects a majority of the members to this board. Financial backing by both Conventions is provided for. The Southern Baptist Convention has made large contributions from the school's inception.

The school's policy is nonsectarian and nonracial. Courses are offered leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity, and Master of Religious Education. The beautiful campus and modern buildings are located on the banks of White's Creek, in the northeastern part of the city. Dr. Maynard P. Turner, Jr., president of the Seminary, is a nominee of the National Baptist Convention.

In 1959, the Seminary had seventy-five members in its

graduating class. Since it opened, in 1924, it has produced many of the outstanding ministers and scholars of the Baptist faith.

Support of the Seminary by the National Baptist Convention has recently occupied the serious attention of Convention leaders, who would like to see the support substantial and its source regular and predictable. Addressing the 1957 Session of the Convention in Louisville, President J. H. Jackson strongly affirmed the school's importance, and the desirability of firm support. He stated that during the preceding year the Convention had paid its full quota for the school's budget—in advance. This action, he said, had caused the Southern Baptist Convention to *increase* its contribution. He recommended that a portion of the profits of the Sunday School Publishing Board's highly successful program be diverted to the needs of the Seminary.

In the field of scholarships, the National Baptist Convention offers three scholarship awards to winners of the oratorical contest held annually on Booker T. Washington night while the Convention is in session.

In 1954, a truly unique scholarship was set up by the Convention. It provides that a stipend of several thousand dollars, representing the proceeds of an educational fund, be awarded annually to a student at Roosevelt University in Chicago, *irrespective of race*. The purpose is to strengthen our nation's total human resources and our liberal tradition of democratic education. The University chooses the recipient.

This scholarship award suggests many of the new trends in the age in which we are now living. It is often asked if the small denominational schools of the recent past can still play a role of importance and value on today's scene. This problem has been receiving the serious consideration of leading Baptists, and their answer at this juncture is definitely yes.

On November 13, 1956, a special conference on this question was called by the National Baptist Convention and convened at Morehouse College. It was attended by twenty-one college presidents or their representatives, and the presidents of several state Baptist conventions that provide support to these colleges.

Reporting on the results of this conference, President Jackson told the 1957 Convention that the schools still have a vital role to fill, and that the day has not come when they can be dispensed with.

"There is great need for these schools," he said, "and this need shall remain for many years to come."

He reported that the Morehouse College Conference had created a continuing organization to study the problem in full detail, and prepare an accurate assessment of the role that these historic colleges and universities should be playing to fulfill today's needs.

Thus educators are agreed that the day for these schools has not passed, although it is likely that many changes are in prospect. This is one of the many complex problems of education that is faced by Negro Baptists, and the American Negro in general, in the days ahead.

Meanwhile, whatever the future may bring, the past has been one of struggle leading to glorious fulfillment. Operation Bootstrap was a success—one of the most complete and overwhelming successes that has ever taken place in a country that has seen many uphill fights and many successes. Negro Baptists can be proud of the role played by their churches, their ministers and leaders, their local and state conventions, and the National Baptist Convention in this great "rehearsal for citizenship." During the climactic years of Operation Bootstrap, the tremendous effort of Negro Baptists placed them in the center stage of America's history and destiny.

CHAPTER IX

Reaching Around the World

Today, the eyes of the whole world are on Africa.

Once regarded as beneath the notice of the great world powers except for its commercial usefulness, Africa has been emerging to a position of international power with almost unbelievable speed.

It is interesting to note how deep and continuous an interest American Negro Baptists have felt in Africa, during eras when the rest of the world had almost no interest at all.

In Chapter III we found Lott Carey going to Liberia as a missionary in 1821. The success of his work made a permanent impression on American Negro Baptist churches. A number of partially or wholly unsuccessful efforts were made by these churches during the succeeding decades, in an attempt to launch effective missionary work in Africa.

Although the initial efforts met with failure, the drive remained as strong as ever, and in 1880 it finally culminated in the Foreign Mission Convention, from which the National Baptist Convention grew. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the wish to do missionary work in Africa created the National Baptist Convention—or even that Lott Carey created it!

As for the effectiveness of Negro Baptist missionary work in Africa, there can be no doubt. At no time has the work of Negro missionaries been as extensive as the work of white missionaries, and yet it has always had an impact and a degree of success far out of proportion to the scale of the effort and the financing.

The work of white ministers of the gospel has often encountered obstacles, because of the centuries of slave trading, colonial rule, and exploitation that have been experienced in Africa. This is probably what Dr. C. C. Adams, corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, had in mind in describing his conclusions after three extended trips to the Convention's mission stations in Africa, between 1945 and 1950:

I take it for granted that you want me to state the facts as I found them. I was soon convinced that for historic and present economic, social and political reasons no one can serve so effectively in African missionary work as a Negro. The Negro missionary is welcomed freely and without suspicion into the African's fullest confidence. It makes any Negro missionary feel very humble to be overwhelmed with such confidence and expectancy.

Dr. Adams said this in an address delivered at the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, in 1950. In that address he said something else that is worth noting: "Africa," he said, "is casting the silent, unconscious, but all-powerful vote to all the world's peace plans and organizations. The vote will prevail."

Bear in mind that Dr. Adams said this in 1950—a full decade before the great African sweep to self-determination and independence had really begun to affect the public statements of the world's political leaders. In 1950 most intelligent people knew vaguely that some day Africa would probably be important. But that day seemed far away. Almost no one, in 1950, was guessing or predicting that more than half of Black Africa would be on its way to self-rule within ten

years. Dr. Adams's statement of 1950 reads like the headlines of 1960. The National Baptist Convention can well be proud of having such evidence to show that the chief executive of its foreign-mission work was in such close touch with future trends and forces in the nations where the missions are maintained.

As for the actual work in the field—we have had nothing to say about it since we discussed Lott Carey, in Chapter III. No really effective foreign-mission work was done under the sponsorship of Negro Baptists until the Reverend Mr. Colley organized the Foreign Mission Convention, in 1880. But a lot of Negro Baptist *ministers* went to Africa under other types of sponsorship from the time of Lott Carey's death, in 1828, until the Reverend Mr. Colley brought the founders' meeting together in Birmingham, Alabama.

One prominent sponsor of Negro missionary work in Africa was a group called the American Colonization Society, which came into existence in 1833. The purpose of this group was to resettle American Negroes in Liberia. On the surface it seemed like a commendable effort, but it had a very special ulterior motive.

The Nat Turner Insurrection of 1831 made the South acutely aware that there were a number of Negro freedmen around everywhere. Some lived in the North and came South on visits; some were freed by certain Southern owners who rebelled against the institution of slavery. Among the latter group, for example, was a Virginia owner who freed the amazing total of eight hundred slaves over an eight-year period. And, of course, as the freedmen married and had children the total population of freedmen increased.

These freedmen caused extreme uneasiness among most Southern plantation owners. Their activities and movements

could not be watched and controlled as could those of their slaves. What if one of them harbored an angry grudge against the white man? The nervous slave owners did not like to consider the possibilities.

The American Colonization Society offered, apparently, a marvelous solution. The freedmen could be shipped back to Africa, and only the slaves would remain!

In the furtherance of its efforts to colonize Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone, the American Colonization Society sponsored—or sometimes co-sponsored with Southern Baptist groups—the work of a number of Negro Baptist missionaries in these areas. It is doubtful whether the missionaries fully understood the real purposes and motives of the American Colonization Society, which seemed to be little more than a genuine benevolent enterprise. And in fact it hardly mattered. Several of these devoted field workers followed in Lott Carey's footsteps and accomplished results that far outweighed the negative features of their sponsor's long-range purpose.

In the North, it didn't take the abolitionists long to perceive the concealed motives of the Colonization Society. William Lloyd Garrison investigated its affairs carefully and was able to prove quite conclusively what its real purposes were. His newspaper articles blasting the Society dealt it a blow from which it never recovered.

Meanwhile, however, both the Northern and Southern Baptist Conventions, motivated by genuine missionary purpose, sent Negro missionaries to Africa both before and after the Civil War. By coincidence, the Southern Baptist Convention's very last Negro missionary of the nineteenth century, the Reverend W. W. Colley, who went out in 1875, was also the man who was to inaugurate the first successful sustained foreign-mission program sponsored by Negro Baptist church-

es. We have seen, in Chapter III, that in 1880 he organized the Foreign Mission Convention.

✱In 1883, the Convention sent its first group of missionaries to Africa, a group whose names are worth recording. They were the Reverend and Mrs. J. J. Coles, the Reverend H. McKinney, the Reverend and Mrs. J. H. Presley, and the Reverend Mr. Colley himself.

The two couples were quite young and exceptionally attractive. The Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention has in its files an old photograph of them, taken just before they sailed. The stiff poses that were then fashionable for photographic studio pictures cannot conceal the close and warm feeling that existed between each husband and wife.

African missionary ventures in those days were perilous undertakings, principally because of the tropical diseases against which there was not yet any defense. This brave little band was decimated by tragedy.

It so happened that in 1883, the very year that the group of missionaries was sent out, Lewis Jordan, who was to become corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board thirteen years later, was sent to Africa by his Waco, Texas, congregation to check and report on prospects for settling in Africa. In Liberia he met the missionaries. In his memoirs he says:

On my visit I met Dr. and Mrs. W. W. Colley, Rev. J. H. Presley and three of our six workers at Grand Cape Mount, Liberia. Brother Presley was a wreck with the tropical fever; Hattie, his wife, within one and a half years, together with her babe, died. Dr. Colley made the boxes in which they were laid to rest in a strange land.

The Reverend Mr. Coles also ultimately became a victim

of the invisible tropical killers. In the small book *Negro Baptists and Foreign Missions* by C. C. Adams and Marshall Talley, the authors say:

Ten years later, Rev. J. J. Coles, who had again returned to the States greatly impaired in health, was elected as the third Corresponding Secretary of the Foreign Mission Convention. Rev. Coles was so weakened in constitution as a result of several attacks of African fever, that shortly after his election to this office his illness became fatal.

His brave wife was appointed by the Board to fill out her husband's unexpired term, which she did with the greatest devotion.

This little group of pioneers, who paid such a tragic price for their selfless efforts, established a missionary station at Bendoo, Cape Mount County, Liberia, which is still maintained by the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention.

The mission work launched by the Foreign Mission Convention with the sponsorship of these missionaries has continued right on up to today by the group's successor organization, the Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention.

Today's program, however, is so vast as to exceed any possible dreams that Dr. Colley and the early missionaries may have had of the growth of their work.

The Foreign Mission Board is now sponsoring active field work, not only in Africa, but also in South America, India, the Pacific islands, and Japan.

In its 1959 report to the Convention, it cited its expenditures as nearly \$750,000. From 1941 to 1957, the Board spent

over \$3,700,000 in the field. It owns property in foreign lands valued at \$400,000.

The Board maintains thirty-five full-time missionaries and over seven hundred part-time assistants. Its missions in Africa have won over 400,000 converts, and have been directly instrumental in the establishment of more than 1,200 Baptist Churches. Its schools in Africa are attended by 18,000 students annually. Hundreds of African students have been brought to this country to receive an education. The Board is a co-operating agency of the World Missionary Alliance and the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches, having been invited to charter membership when the group was formed, in 1950. The Reverend C. C. Adams, the Board's corresponding secretary, was elected as the new group's first chairman, a testimonial to his international prestige.

The foundations for the great program were laid by Lewis G. Jordan, corresponding secretary from 1896 to 1921. He was succeeded by the Reverend J. E. East, a former South African missionary for the Board, who remained in the secretaryship until his death in 1934. The Reverend J. H. Jackson, later to become president of the Convention, held the post until 1941, when he was succeeded by Dr. C. C. Adams.

Liberia, the destination of most of the early Negro Baptist missionaries, is the country in which the Board still has the greatest number of projects. The principal project in this country may well be the best known and most important of any being carried out by the Board anywhere. The Carrie V. Dyer Memorial Hospital is the key health center of the entire nation, and Liberia's Vice President, the Honorable W. R. Tolbert, is on its Board of Directors. The one-hundred-bed facility has the commendation and support of the United States Public Health

Service. It is the nation's only fully equipped modern hospital. In 1948, when Dr. C. C. Adams was knighted by the Liberian Government, the hospital was mentioned again and again by President Tubman in his award speech.

Miss Carrie V. Dyer, the principal donor of the initial sums that made the hospital possible, was one of the many women who went south under the auspices of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, after the Civil War, to teach the freedmen. We have already met a number of these wonderful people. Miss Dyer was instrumental in the founding of both Roger Williams University and Hartshorne Memorial College. She died in 1921 at the age of eighty-two, leaving a legacy which the Women's Auxiliary Convention was able to utilize to launch the great project of creating a hospital in Liberia, a country that had no hospitals at all.

The hospital is under the direction of highly skilled doctors sent by the Foreign Mission Board. Recently its staff has been expanded, and a badly needed nurse's home has been built adjoining the hospital.

A living symbol of the missionary spirit and of international Christian brotherhood, the hospital has had an effect on the country of Liberia—and all the countries of West Africa—that is beyond calculation.

It is, unfortunately, not large enough to meet the desperate and tragic demands that are constantly placed upon it. Its staff is chronically overworked and its facilities overcrowded, both virtually swamped by a sea of human suffering.

Dr. Adams, discussing the future of all the Board's mission programs, has spoken so eloquently of the need for stronger support of this desperately needed oasis of modern medicine in an underdeveloped land that his plea is worth quoting:

A new evaluation must be given to the Carrie V. Dyer Hospital in Monrovia. This hospital has lifted the face and esteem of Negro Baptists in the eyes of the world as perhaps no other institution in Africa. This institution is a Godsend to all classes of suffering humanity in Africa, both high and low, white and black, native and civilized.

The building of the nurse's home, he says, has been a long stride forward, and by expending great effort the Foreign Mission Board has been able to assemble a staff of outstanding and dedicated surgeons. It has modern operating equipment, an X-ray machine, a well-equipped laboratory, and most other basic necessities of a contemporary hospital.

But, says Dr. Adams, it must grow if it is to provide help that is at least reasonably equal to the volume of illness and suffering. It is a need that should lie upon the heart of every contributor to the cause of foreign missions.

In addition to the hospital, the Board's mission program in Liberia includes five schools with a combined enrollment of eight hundred students, including Bendoo Industrial Mission, on the site where the first group of missionaries suffered, and Mrs. Presley and her child died.

Seventeen missionaries are at work in Liberia, and the schools and hospital employ eighty native personnel.

The center of activity in nearby Nigeria is the Pilgrim Mission station in the tiny village of Issele-Uku. This mission has a total staff of eighty-seven persons, and its numerous branch schools accommodate 4,000 students every year. With an eye turned toward the approaching nationhood and self-government problems of this newly emerging state, a teachers college has been founded at the mission station to prepare both schoolteachers and community leaders.

The Board has a second hospital on the continent—at the Providence Industrial Mission in Nyasaland. The supervisor of this activity is a man with an extensive background both in medicine and in religious missionary work, Dr. D. S. Malekebu. Dr. Malekebu is one of the best-known personalities in East Africa. He not only superintends the hospital at Providence Mission, but has general charge of the entire program in Nyasaland and South Africa. He is a graduate of Meharry Medical College, is married to an African woman, and has a following throughout a tremendous area of Africa that is matched by few, if any, other living persons.

The South African work has its headquarters in the W. W. Brown Mission, in Johannesburg. The reader is doubtless familiar with the intensive policies of Negro discrimination employed by the government of this nation, and this hampers the work and often introduces a note of sadness. The Mission nevertheless is the informal shepherd of no less than fifty Negro Baptist churches, and two schools with fifteen hundred pupils.

Other major projects in Africa include a newly established missionary program in Ghana; sponsorship of a girls' training school in Sierra Leone; support of a leprosarium in the Belgian Congo; and the operation of a central mission station with branches, in Southern Rhodesia.

On this side of the Atlantic the Board is carrying out major projects in the Bahama Islands and in Nicaragua, Central America.

In the Bahamas, a beautiful school building has been erected and is in operation. It is known, appropriately enough, as the Jordan Memorial Baptist Training School, and it was erected at a cost of \$40,000. It is attached to the central mission, which is known as the L. G. Jordan Station. This station

serves seventy-two churches on islands throughout the West Indies.

The station in Nicaragua is also known as the Jordan Memorial Mission. Recent progress includes the construction of a \$25,000 church.

The Board has recently opened up some new and unusual work in three new areas: Okinawa, Japan, and India.

A missionary in India has been designated, and preliminary explorations of the needs are still being made.

The work on Okinawa is being done in co-operation with the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches of Christ. The Board makes a contribution to the program along with many other foreign-mission boards and societies. The mission work on Okinawa is under the supervision of a minister who is native to the island. It includes a broad diversity of activities in the fields of home missions, education, and religious instruction.

Even more unusual is the work in Japan. The Foreign Mission Board has joined with the foreign-mission boards of several other denominations as a co-founder and sponsor of a new institution of higher learning, the Japanese International Christian University. The University is interdenominational and interracial, and is a Christian adventure in higher education, offering work only at the graduate level.

This University has attracted the attention and praise of the entire international world of scholarship. The Foreign Mission Board, convinced of the great importance of the University and the ideas that lie behind it, had provided \$45,000 in support of it as of 1959.

This vast missionary program is directed from a building in Philadelphia owned by the Foreign Mission Board. Its headquarters, after having been moved from Richmond to

Louisville, in 1896, were moved back east to Philadelphia, in 1912—this time to stay. From this office is also issued *The Mission Herald*. Founded in 1897 and published quarterly since then, it is the oldest continuous publication in the entire Convention.

For a long time, leaders and laymen alike, in the Convention, have wondered whether the Convention's *entire* missionary program—home and foreign—should not be under one roof.

In his address to the Seventy-fifth Annual Session of the Convention, in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1955, President Jackson put the proposal into words:

I recommend that the convention will authorize the creation of a Department of Missions, and begin now to develop a unified missionary and educational program, and the headquarters of our Foreign Mission Board in Philadelphia, will become the headquarters of our Department of Missions.

This does not in any wise destroy the function or work of the Home Mission Board, the Benefit Board, and the Educational Board. But it means that the solicitation of funds will be a joint program, and a budget will be set up for each one of these agencies, but each agency will work for the realization of the total missionary budget.

This suggestion was enthusiastically endorsed by the Convention. A recent renovation of the Foreign Mission Board's building in Philadelphia, resulting in sufficient additional space to accommodate the other Boards, rendered the plan doubly practical.

Of all the plans and suggestions for future foreign-mission

activity by the Board, the Convention, and individual members of the faith, there is perhaps none like the one that was presented to the 1959 Session in San Francisco.

In May of that year, President J. H. Jackson wrote the following letter to President William V. S. Tubman of the Republic of Liberia:

May 11, 1959

William V. S. Tubman, President
Monrovia, Liberia
West Africa

DEAR PRESIDENT TUBMAN:

As you know, the National Baptist Convention is keenly interested in Liberia and has been for years. Our Suehn Mission and our other mission stations are proofs of our interest.

In the light of changing times and changing emphasis, some of us in the National Baptist Convention have been concerned about a closer fellowship between our people and the people of your great country. We believe that our Foreign Mission enterprise can make a great contribution at this point. Before we go any further, we are desirous of receiving some advice from the head of the state or his representative.

Would the Liberian Government welcome American Negroes who would be concerned about purchasing land in Liberia and cultivating it? Would the Liberian Government encourage our Foreign Mission Board to solicit young doctors, trained farmers and teachers to come to Liberia for the purpose of establishing Christian com-

munities out in rural districts as home sites in order to become citizens of the country?

It is the belief of some of us that that type of missionary program would mean more to the country and to the Christian cause than the older type that we have followed. Of course we do not discredit our former work in the field of missions. We simply wish to strengthen and improve it.

Before we begin emphasizing this aspect, we feel the need of your advice and counsel.

Thanking you for your consideration.

Yours truly,
J. H. JACKSON
President

This letter, of course, embodies some ideas about foreign missions that are truly revolutionary. The suggestion strikingly resembles the "aid to underdeveloped countries" concept that is being increasingly used to build and protect the free community of nations throughout the world today. The plan in this letter suggests that aid to the world's poverty-stricken nations, of the direct type needed to help them rise from poverty, is a Christian duty and a proper focus for foreign-mission efforts. It also gives every interested and dedicated church member an opportunity to turn himself into a "one man Point Four Program"! In other words, it would provide for those who want it a way of direct personal participation in the modern world's greatest problem—the conquest of poverty throughout the two-thirds of the earth that does not get enough to eat.

President Tubman replied as follows:

THE EXECUTIVE MANSION
MONROVIA

May 28, 1959

DEAR MR. JACKSON,

I acknowledge with thanks receipt of your letter of May 11th.

We in Liberia have noted with great satisfaction the interest of your Convention in our Country especially through the operation of the Suehn Mission. The Government of Liberia would welcome and be pleased to have American Negroes who are interested in naturalization and purchasing land come out and especially young doctors, trained farmers, teachers, and other interested persons who may desire to establish Christian homes and become citizens.

I am sure that this type of missionary work would contribute considerably to our various programs.

Kind Regards.

Sincerely,
W. V. S. TUBMAN

The Reverend Mr. Jackson addressed a similar letter to Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and received a reply from Nkrumah's secretary that the government was considering the idea and would write to him about it.

The Reverend Mr. Jackson presented the idea to the 1959 Convention, saying, "We would suggest that the Foreign Mission Board purchase the available land from the Liberian Government, to be purchased from the Board and used by

young people who are desirous of building permanent Christian communities in Liberia.”

This remarkable idea caused much discussion and debate. Perhaps the most important thing it showed is that, in the revolutionary new world in which we are now living, original ideas are our greatest need.

And after all, the National Baptist Convention was itself a revolutionary idea—a creative challenge to the problems of the times.

CHAPTER X

The Convention Today and Tomorrow

The National Baptist Convention is the third largest Protestant denomination in America, and is the largest Negro denomination in the entire world.

The Convention has more than 27,500 ministers, and more than 26,000 churches.

Total membership in these churches has passed the five million mark and is continuing to grow rapidly.

Over 2,200,000 children are enrolled in Sunday schools of the Convention's churches.

This is the amazing story of a movement that started from tiny beginnings in 1880 and did not assume its present form until 1895.

Many of the Convention's important activities and achievements have already been described. In addition to these, there are a number of other major programs in which the Convention is currently engaged.

The religious education programs of the Convention and its Boards are well known to every churchgoer. The Baptist Training Union, the Laymen's League, the Women's Auxiliary, the Educational Board, and the Home Missions Board have all been involved in important programs of religious education and training.

The Baptist Young People's Union was accepted into the Convention as a constituent Board in 1899. Its principal function has been to design imaginative programs, built around the materials issued by the Sunday School Publishing Board,

for the religious education of the Convention's youth. The BYPU was recently consolidated with the Baptist Adult Union to form the Baptist Training Union. With the two groups united, co-ordinated educational programs can be planned both for young people and adults.

The extent and variety of the programs is suggested by the number of active groups. The Sunshine Band is for girls and boys of four to nine years of age. The Junior Red Circle is for girls of nine to eleven years of age; the Intermediate Red Circle, for girls of twelve to fourteen; and the Senior Red Circle, for girls of fifteen to seventeen. For boys in the equivalent age groups there are the Explorers, the Caravaners, and the TABS (teen-age boys).

For adult women there are the Young Women's Auxiliary, the Young Matrons' Auxiliary—and, of course, the Women's Auxiliary itself. For men there are the Junior Laymen's Group and the Laymen's League.

The Baptist Training Union has been sponsoring annual summer retreats for young people that have been outstandingly successful. Individual churches, local BTU groups, and state conventions have all participated in the planning.

In 1958 *The Baptist Layman*, a quarterly for members of the Baptist Laymen's League, was launched and has been most favorably received.

The Laymen's League has also established the John L. Webb Scholarship Fund, providing an annual stipend of at least five hundred dollars to a deserving student, and adding one more to the myriad types of educational and financial assistance available to students through Negro Baptist churches and associations.

Also in the educational field, the Home Mission Board has been a principal sponsor of the Brooks Baptist Student Center in Washington, D.C. It is designed as an off-campus place for

study and relaxation, principally for the benefit of students attending Howard University. The Center conducts an activities program of its own, and has lounges, desks, and a library for the use of students.

Another important area of great concern to the Convention has been the problem of proper retirement provisions for its ministers. Everyone agrees that this is a responsibility that has been neglected too long. Many a minister, after rendering selfless service—often for modest and even poor remuneration—to a congregation for many decades, has faced the prospect of an old age bordering on destitution.

The Convention first came squarely to grips with the problem in 1954. In his address to the Convention, President J. H. Jackson stated:

We have already decided in our Board of Directors, that it would be wise to launch a Million Dollar Campaign in this session of our Convention, assuming that it would be acceptable to you. It is our hope to do the following out of this proposed million dollars:

First, to begin a Retirement Program for the Ministers, missionaries and Christian workers of our Convention.

Two, to begin a relief program for the aged ministers and Christian workers, by securing a home where the old veterans of the Gospel may spend the closing days of their earthly existence in the presence of their comrades and in surroundings that are commensurate with the sacrifices and contributions they have made to the work of the denomination and to the Kingdom.

Three, we would like to begin the work of Church Extension. We should make provisions for struggling churches to secure loans without being robbed by loan

sharks, and free the people from paying the unusually high interest that many churches are forced to pay.

Four, if we can get sufficient funds, then our program of education will be enlarged, and the gift of scholarships will be greatly increased.

This approach, combining the Ministers' Retirement Fund in a general fund-raising drive to accomplish four highly important objectives, was strongly endorsed by the Convention, and the drive was promptly launched.

The seriousness of the objective, and the determination of the Convention and its leaders to attain it, was underscored in the 1955 session, which marked the Diamond Jubilee of the Convention. President Jackson said:

The program that we launched last year requires greater sacrifices and larger contributions from our pastors and our churches. The Million Dollar Campaign for the Retirement Fund and Church Extension Work is a most urgent need. We voted to begin, in this annual session, a serious attempt to realize this financial goal.

Special assessments were made from each delegate, minister, and church, and a substantial sum was raised. The fund has grown steadily in each succeeding year.

By 1958, it was felt advisable to create a special Board to oversee the fund and its operation. In the early years of 1960, the first disbursements from the fund were scheduled to be made, and the dream of a genuine and effective retirement program for the Convention's ministers will then become a reality.

The problem of higher education has also assumed a role of special importance in the Convention's recent proceedings.

We have already seen, in Chapter Eight, that the Convention has been strengthening its support of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, has expanded its program of scholarships, and has been studying the problem of the functions of the Baptist-sponsored colleges and universities in our changing society.

Addressing the Convention on these and other educational issues during the 1956 session, President Jackson made the following recommendations:

I suggest that the National Baptist Convention will set up a special program on education and the following things will be included:

1. That we create a Commission on Education out of the Presidents of our Baptist schools and teachers within the territory of the National Baptist Convention.

2. That said commission will be asked to study the educational content of all of our Baptist schools, large and small.

3. That they will recommend a merger where such would be in the interest of more efficiency and to suggest expansion where it is needed. Said expansion may be in terms of graduate training on different levels and new buildings where improved facilities are needed.

4. We would begin with resources, organizations, buildings and personnel that Baptists already possess. With schools like Morehouse College, Bishop College, the College at Tyler, Texas, Natchez, Benedict, Morris, Virginia Union, Leland, and other Baptist schools, we should make our beginning. We need not lay anew the foundation that is already laid; we should build on that foundation and be more concerned about the educational content and growth than we are about real estate.

It may be we will find that we have sufficient real estate across the several states in Baptist schools to house many more students than are housed at the present time.

5. The National Baptist Convention will launch an educational drive for ten million dollars, half of which to be invested for endowments, and the other half for expansion. We would depend very largely upon our special Commission on Education to advise and direct us. The Educational Commission would give their time to the development program upon which we would concentrate to raise the necessary funds.

These goals should be achieved within a period of ten years. We must not deceive ourselves. There is still a great need for our educational institutions, but they must be placed on a higher scholastic standard. Self-help in the field of education is far more urgent today than ever in the history of our people.

The problem of education has always been a supreme challenge for the Negro people and for Negro Baptists. Although parts of this suggested program have been put into operation, much of it has not been accomplished. This area will remain one of the most important and critical ones for the Convention, its churches, and all its members in the years immediately ahead.

Among the more unusual and useful recent accomplishments of the Convention has been the acquisition and management of the Bath House in Hot Springs, Arkansas.

The Convention has long felt the need for an adequate facility that could be used for meetings and also for rest and recreation for Convention members.

In 1950, a Bath House at Hot Springs, which had been the

property of the Federal Government, was offered for sale. A commission of the Convention investigated, and strongly recommended that the Convention acquire the property.

The Bath House was accordingly purchased for \$300,000. Since that time an approximately equivalent sum has been expended for modernization and improvements.

Today, the facility is worth three times the amount that the Convention has invested in it, and holds great promise both for increased usefulness and increased profitability.

Meetings of the Convention's Executive Committee and Boards are regularly held there, and the facility is available for use by all Convention members. Other individuals and groups may use it at rates established by the Bath House Commission, a special group set up to administer the property. Several large national groups are already making regular use of the Bath House, and others are expected to do likewise in the near future.

The Convention owes much to the alertness of Dr. R. C. Woods, pastor of the Roanoke Baptist Church in Hot Springs, who learned that the Government was going to place the facility on the market and strongly urged that the Convention acquire it.

One of the Convention's most rapidly expanding functions during recent years has been its increasing role of representing Negro Baptists in the civic and religious counsels of the nation and the world.

For example, in 1955 the Convention petitioned Congress, on behalf of its members, to make May 17, the day of the Supreme Court's historic decision on public schools, a legal holiday. On January 25, a bill was promptly introduced as a result of this petition. Bill H. R. 3016 would have established the holiday. It did not pass, but its prompt introduction

and consideration reflect the Convention's prestige and growing importance as a principal spokesman for the aspirations of the American Negro.

On December 8 and 9 of the same year, President Eisenhower called a nation-wide housing conference for minorities, in Washington, D. C. The President of the National Baptist Convention was invited to make one of the principal statements to the conference. President Jackson immediately secured from state leaders and prominent laymen in the Convention their information and points of view on the problem, and presented these to the conference.

In 1957, in his State of the Union Message before the Eighty-fifth Congress, President Eisenhower urged Congress to pass a civil rights act, creating a Civil Rights Commission and improving Federal machinery for handling civil rights cases. Following his message, bills were introduced, but appeared in danger of being bottled up in committees.

In April, 1957, the Convention participated in a massive "Urge Congress" movement, designed to get the bills out of committee and onto the floor of Congress. Observers agree that this impressive demonstration of citizen interest was an important factor in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1957, the first civil rights legislation enacted by Congress since Reconstruction days.

The Convention makes frequent statements on the current status of Negro Americans, and is in frequent correspondence with officials of the Federal Government from the President on down, and also with state and local officials where problems and crises arise.

Negroes need not be told that the struggle for equality and dignity is one in which the nation is still deeply involved. It is often vividly brought home by occurrences within the Convention.

In the 1959 session in San Francisco, the Convention was introduced to the Reverend H. Dupree, pastor of four rural churches in Mississippi. The Reverend Mr. Dupree described how his home was entered in the middle of the night by men who terrorized him and his family, and told them to get out of the house within two minutes and never return.

The Reverend Mr. Dupree and his wife and children were driven forth into the night in their night clothes, and forbidden to take anything with them. Fearful for their lives, they dared not return to their home, and thus have lost all their earthly goods and possessions.

The Reverend Mr. Dupree stood before the Convention in a borrowed suit to tell his story. His son, who had been preparing to enter college in the fall, was now without any financial means to commence his studies.

Supplementing the Reverend Mr. Dupree's story, President Jackson told the Convention that he had sent a telegram to the Governor of Mississippi asking for the protection of the Reverend Mr. Dupree's right to obtain his personal goods, to dispose of his property if he so desired, and to be free from the danger of violence or loss of his life in so doing. The Governor of Mississippi had not deigned to reply.

The Convention promptly voted to employ the Reverend Mr. Dupree for a period of six months while he attempted to re-establish himself in a new life, and to underwrite his son's initial expenses in college. Men and women in the audience pressed forward with gifts for their afflicted brother.

On the international scene, the National Baptist Convention was the first American Baptist group to have an accredited representative to the United Nations, and it is still the only Negro religious group to have such representation. The Convention's accredited representative is the Reverend Robert E. Harmond, who reports annually to the Convention's sessions

on the positions he has taken and the statements he has made before the UN's various specialized agencies. This activity has resulted in a remarkable outreach for Negro Baptists, bringing them and their views before the governments and peoples of the world.

The National Baptist Convention is a member of the National Council of Churches of Christ, the Baptist World Alliance, and the World Council of Churches. Its affiliation with the National Council of Churches brings the Negro Baptist voice into the counsels of interdenominational religious life in America. The other affiliations bring contact with Christians over the entire face of the earth.

The Convention has repeatedly received recognition as a highly respected member of all these groups. For example, the ninety-member Central Committee of the World Council of Churches has included four Baptists, one of whom was the president of the National Baptist Convention.

Membership in the Baptist World Alliance has brought such opportunities as participation in a Christian Conference on World Peace with a group of Quakers and Baptists from the United States, Great Britain, Sweden, and Russia in 1954; a two-week preaching tour of the Soviet Union in 1955, at the invitation of Russian Baptist leaders; the inviting and entertaining of five Russian Baptist ministers on a visit to the United States, in 1956; and participation in the world-wide assemblies of the Alliance, where barriers of race and nationality are overcome and links of human understanding can be forged.

The Convention's prominence and importance bring other opportunities to advance the cause of world peace. In 1959 the American Friends of the Middle East sponsored a good-will mission by twenty-seven American civic and religious leaders. The president of the National Baptist Convention was one of

the twenty-seven persons invited to go on the tour. The invitation was accepted, and the presence of a Negro leader was especially important in attaining the mission's goal of interpreting America to the leaders and peoples of this troubled area of the world.

Returning to the domestic scene, recent years have seen tremendous movement, change, and progress for the cause of Negro rights in the United States. The Convention has inevitably drawn attention to these developments as part of its Christian moral responsibility, and has issued many statements on the major developments, issues, and crises of our times in the field of race relations. It has also taken note of other major problems both in the domestic and the international affairs of the nation.

While keeping pace with all these activities and trends, the Convention itself is changing as the world itself changes. In this connection it is fascinating to note the reactions of an especially perceptive journalist to the 1958 and 1959 sessions of the Convention. John W. Bradbury, editor of *The Watchman-Examiner*, a weekly Baptist magazine, covered both sessions for his publication and wrote extended reports, including a section of "Conclusion and Comment."

Reporting on the 1958 session in Chicago, Bradbury was impressed by the deeply religious approach of the group to the great social revolution and the struggle for full citizenship status for the Negro. He said:

This Convention was held under the shadowing pressure of one of the greatest social crises of our time. The matter of desegregation and social justice for the Negro race was uppermost in the thoughts of the people as indicated in their deep response to the speakers, almost all of whom treated the subject.

This session had been addressed by Former Congressman Brooks Hays of Arkansas, who won the hearts of his audience with his appeal for Christian understanding in the face of all controversy and difference. Immediately upon the conclusion of Hays's address, President Jackson stepped to the microphone and declared solemnly, "I have just received word through the wire service in Washington, that the Supreme Court has ordered Little Rock to integrate immediately." He specifically asked that there should be no clapping or cheering, but that the delegates should stand and offer their thanks to God in humble prayer.

Commenting on this, Bradbury wrote:

When at the close of Congressman Hays' address, which was well received, President Jackson announced the Supreme Court's Little Rock decision and called for silent prayers of thanksgiving, [and] closed the period with oral prayer for wisdom to be given to the Governor of Arkansas and "all others in the government of the states and the nation," there were deep "amens" and numerous other personal prayers. The atmosphere in this tense moment was more religious than political, more spiritual than social, therefore deeper and fraught with immense power.

Bradbury emphasized that the Convention, in the face of events of great political and social significance, had viewed them through religious and spiritual eyes, in keeping with the Convention's status as a religious group that sought to reconcile men to each other rather than promote partisan causes.

His report continued:

Under the religious motivation which directs the high-

est level of Negro leadership there abides the hope that bitterness and harsh fighting will not be a dominant tone in the struggle, which might leave a residue of alienation for generations to come. They have seized upon the ideal that the rights they seek are God-ordained and believe that they will yet have them. In standing for their rights they feel that they stand before God.

The spiritual fervor of the Convention, at its peak, was the most persuasive and convincing appeal for freedom, so that to oppose would appear to battle against the sovereign purpose of God.

This searching analysis probes to the heart of the Convention's approach to the spiritual and moral aspects of the great question of the Negro's role in American life.

Reporting on the 1959 session held in San Francisco, Bradbury directs his careful attention to additional currents in the life and growth of the Convention. "The Christian Negro is undoubtedly emerging into a new era," he said. "There will be many developments. Growing freedom means added responsibility for any race that wishes to retain the distinctive dignity with which it is endowed by the Creator."

He noted that the Convention is moving through this period of change with an unwavering devotion to its fundamental faith.

"It was a pleasant experience," he wrote, "to sit through, participate in and report a Convention which is unquestioning about and solidly for the Gospel of Christ. The more fervent a speaker became in the affirmation of our faith, the more enthusiastic was the response from the people."

He then went on to observe the great change from the old to the new that was taking place within this basic framework of united belief. He reported:

There are two currents of life flowing through the ranks of Negro Baptists. One is the deep symphony of the cotton fields of long ago, the surging song of the evening fellowship when the day's hard work was done, the spiritual fire and outburst of moral aspiration and wonderful redemption of the camp meeting, where preaching was in the agony of the spirit.

Of this there are a declining number of symbols left. The Convention's "Gospel Golden Hour" was in truth "a sunset hour," an unforgettable scene dedicated to ministers who have ministered the Gospel for 50 years or more. [These ministers] were not only a benediction but a pattern of those who have made the Christian Negro great.

The second current flowing through the life of Negro Baptists is created by a new generation of youth stirred deeply to seek the best in education and culture for the employment of their divinely endowed talents.

It is this eagerness that must be directed toward Christian ends. The churches must not lose this generation of youth but make way for them and their zeal for freedom.

But this envisioned youth must never lose that evangelical fervor which made their parents and grandparents great in their limitations and sufferings, laying deep and unshakable foundations in the faith of our fathers, that they might prepare the way of the Lord in generations yet unborn.

There is little to add to this perceptive analysis of the priceless and immeasurable contributions that are being made to the Convention by both its old and its new members. Both currents in the Convention reflect its vital link to the whole of American civilization, and the great role that the Convention

has played and will play in the religious and cultural history of the nation.

Few religious groups have had the privilege of influencing so deeply the moral values and the culture of their country. The story of Negro progress in America touches, at every turn, the story of Negro Baptists. Here we have a true example of religion as a vital force in life.

CHAPTER XI

The Member and His Church

The 1959 session of the National Baptist Convention unanimously adopted a statement that many people regard as the most important pronouncement of its kind that the denomination has ever framed.

When it was adopted, copies were sent to the President of the United States and to the governors of many states.

Since it has been issued, it has evoked widespread comment and favorable reaction in the nation's press.

The statement is entitled "Re-Affirmation of Our Faith in the Nation." It is, in effect, a personal affirmation by each member of the Convention who accepts its principles.

Because of its importance to every Negro Baptist, the full text is reproduced below:

1. We believe in the United States of America: land of opportunity, a country dedicated to freedom and democracy.

2. We believe in its Constitution: the supreme law of the land.

3. We believe in the right of all citizens to participate equally according to their several abilities in all the cultural privileges, in all the political and economic affairs of this great republic.

4. We believe that all citizens should take their full share of the responsibility in building a greater, stronger,

and better America for the weal of man and to the glory of God.

5. We believe that segregation and discrimination based upon race, national origins, or religion are not only sins against the fundamental laws of the land but also against the Supreme Law Giver. We must continue to fight the sins against human freedom without apology, without compromise.

6. We are convinced that every state has far more to gain by applying the principles and the ideals of the Federal Constitution at the local level.

7. We believe that no race or group should be discouraged for seeking to improve their mental, economic, political and moral status but rather should be encouraged and guided since the development of a part contributes to the enrichment of the whole. To neglect a minority greatly weakens the nation as a whole, handicapping the majority and penalizing those in places of power and influence.

8. We believe that a voluntary togetherness of the race based upon constructive and creative ventures is desired and should be encouraged in the interest of the preservation of racial values and the growth of the group as a whole within the democratic framework of the nation.

9. We believe that our leaders, our organizations, and our press should more and more recognize the presence and the positions of a vast number of white people who are dedicated to the laws of this land, who are ashamed of the sins being committed against the soul of the nation, who are working for the growth of democracy and who are suffering for the fulfillment of America's dream of freedom.

10. We also believe that all minority groups should be willing to cooperate with other people of good will whenever and wherever they are committed to the task of upholding the laws of the land, defending the country's cause, working for complete democracy, and a full victory for freedom.

11. We believe that the battle for freedom is not only America's battle but also the battle of all humanity supported by the moral laws of the universe and by the God who made out of one blood all races of men to dwell in peace on the face of the earth. And the struggle must move forward to victory since right is right and God is God.

12. We believe that first-class citizenship is essential for the realization of a first-class democracy and that a first-class democracy will give first-class freedom in which will be developed first-class personalities, first-class people, first-class thinkers, and first-class statesmen; all of these working together will build a first-class social order of good will, justice, understanding, and peace.

13. While we believe in the separation of Church and State, we believe in the Christian Church not only as a community of believers held together by a common loyalty to Jesus Christ but also as a redemptive influence and a vital part of the soul of the nation.

14. We believe in God, the Creator of heaven and earth; we believe in the dignity of man, in the triumph of justice, and in the victory of the truth.

This notable statement is intended not only to give the denomination's position on the difficult issues of our day, but to help the individual Negro Baptist in his own thinking about his role.

Each church member is faced with the issue of how to relate his religious belief to his daily life. For Negro Baptists, this raises the question of how to relate his religion to the social progress of his race in American society.

Another important issue for individual church members is the expansion of the Convention's general scale of activity.

By comparison with many other religious bodies of its size, the Convention's programs are carried on a small scale.

Thus, for example, the 1959 session was informed that the entire budget for the Convention's Home Mission Society for the past year was less than \$10,000.

In the foreign-missions field, the Convention's program, although it has grown tremendously in the past twenty years, falls far below the standards set by comparable denominations.

In *Negro Baptists and Foreign Missions*, the Reverend C. C. Adams and the Reverend Marshall A. Talley face the problem directly:

The equipment of our stations and the number of our workers alongside that of white missionary stations is inconceivably poor, inadequate, and below grade in comparison.

Be it remembered that our mission work abroad is a measuring rod of the caliber of our leaders and constituencies of our National Baptist Convention, Inc. Our boast of more members than Northern Baptists, and of almost as many as Southern Baptists, hurts us seriously when the world measures the small amount of support given to our foreign work by the vast amount given by the Northern Baptist and Southern Baptist Boards to their work. The contrast is so vast that the situation creates serious embarrassment to the executive officers of our Board.

Just before World War II opened, it was claimed that there were approximately 8,000 white missionaries in Africa, drawing salaries from \$100 to \$200 a month. The average wage was \$150. From the same survey it was estimated that there are less than 300 American-born colored missionaries in the whole Continent of Africa, earning salaries of about half of that paid white missionaries, and, in some instances, only one-third of what white missionaries got. This situation puts us on the defensive with respect to our foreign mission policy, lest the whole body of Negro Baptists in America will be seriously misunderstood and misinterpreted, before the astonished gaze of a cold and indifferent world to Negroes and their church enterprises.

Financial issues involving expansion of the Convention's outreach have received increased attention in recent sessions, and the magnitude of the deficiency has been repeatedly underscored by events. The million-dollar drive for a Retirement Fund, the adequate financing of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, and the proposed ten-million-dollar fund for expanding the programs and facilities of Baptist colleges and universities have all highlighted the question of the degree of responsibility that members are willing to assume for the progress of their denomination and their race.

In his reports on both the 1958 and 1959 sessions of the Convention, John W. Bradbury, editor of the *Watchman-Examiner* and a friendly critic whose writings we have already cited in Chapter Ten, felt constrained to comment on this feature of the Convention and its activity.

Writing on the 1958 session, Bradbury said:

As one who has sympathetically followed the growth

of Negro Baptist work with increasing appreciation of the interest shown in a rising standard of Christian culture and more up-to-date methods, I may be permitted to suggest that further progress should be made in the financial support of the Convention, its missionary agencies and its institutions. For instance, instead of some six or seven hundred thousand dollars for the Convention, there should be twice or three times the amount. While the sum of \$25,000 is allotted to be raised for the American Baptist Seminary at Nashville, Tennessee, and is a distinct advance, it is not commensurate with either the need of the school or the churches which benefit from the training it furnishes their young men and women committed to life service for Christ.

A program of Christian stewardship, not so possible a generation ago, can be instituted for the enlistment for Christ of the economic benefits which are steadily accruing to the Negro race and are bound to increase with the passing of time. Nothing so raises the dignity of a church as a true and high standard of stewardship systematically promoted and with true Christian motivation.

After observing the proceedings of the 1959 session, Dr. Bradbury returned to this theme in his report. Commenting on the need for expanded support of education by the Convention, he said:

The new day calls for a greater system of ministerial training than now exists. Such schools as are recognized by the Convention should be undergirded by Christian stewardship.

In fact, the subject of stewardship was a missing note

in this Convention, although it was seriously implied by several speakers.

It must be more than implied. A great burden of Christian stewardship needs to be laid upon our Baptist Negroes. The "poverty" belt is shrinking, thank God. Hundreds of thousands are repaying the rewards to trades unionism and have more money than their parents and grandparents ever dreamed of.

That their churches are not reaping where they have sowed along the years is evidenced by the use the average Negro is making of his money. He needs a sense of stewardship for the cause of Christ and the churches that have brought salvation to him. No matter how much the Negro gives to his church and its causes, he will never be able to pay in the full the debt he owes it.

These are honest words on one of the supreme challenges facing the Convention in the immediate future. Will its works and its deeds be equal to its numbers, bringing progress to the race and reflecting credit on Negro Baptists in the eyes of the nation and the world?

Fifty years ago, and even twenty-five years ago, the Convention and its membership had not progressed to the point at which such a question could be seriously raised. Today, the question cannot be ignored; it remains a central concern of every member of the denomination.

The final great issue facing Convention members is the question of carrying the treasure of the past into the future.

American society is changing so fast, and Negro history in particular is undergoing such a revolution, that it is all too easy to lose touch with the heritage of those who, in former days, built so well with such meager facilities and opportunities.

The issue is highlighted by the great international crisis of the times in which we live, the great dangers to which our democracy is exposed to by its enemies, both within and without, and the great question of the role of true religion in shaping men and women who can meet the challenge of today and tomorrow.

Many speakers at recent sessions of the Convention have discussed these great spiritual problems. In his address to the 1956 session, President Jackson spoke on the theme "Men for the Hour." He said:

We have the theory for practice, and the laws to govern and the established rules by which to play the game of life.

We have a worthy constitution for the United States of America, we have a sufficient charter for the United Nations, we have the historic creeds and the Holy Book for the Christian Church.

But we are so deficient in men in whom the theory has become practice. We need men to match the mountains that we face today. The nation needs men who are the living embodiment of her ideals of democracy and a concrete incarnation of her concept of freedom. The nation needs men who will give their all for the nation's cause.

When the spiritual tide runs low and a generation is caught in the web of materialism and worldliness, and the witnesses to divine truth are all too few for the urgent task at hand; then God needs some dramatic personalities who will rise above the logic of material things and commit themselves to His lofty cause.

They must be men who live not for self, but for the salvation of the nation; not for comfort but for an all-

consuming cause. When Grecian minds seemed to stop at the level of the material universe in their quest for wisdom, a Socrates was required to rise above the customary and to show the value of the human mind and the human spirit in the attainment of true wisdom. He stood alone and won for himself the cup of poison hemlock, but he left his imprint on the soul of Greece, and his legacy has blessed the minds of men through the centuries.

When the ancient Hebrews needed a new birth of faith, an Abraham had to be found who was willing to divorce himself from the comforts of home and from the joys of kin and country to go out into the dark unknown, unconscious of where the untried trail would lead.

But he took the venture and became the friend of God and laid the foundation for the great confraternity of an undying faith.

In this day of moral and spiritual poverty, God needs men who are not too much in love with the world's loaves and fishes but who can free themselves from the craze for gold and silver, and be divorced from the pleasures of the present system in order to condemn the wrong and uphold the right.

God needs men whose first love is the kingdom of truth and whose commitment is to His will in spite of the crisis and in spite of affliction and the threat of chains. He who would speak words of life to a dying age must rise above that age and hold fellowship with the order of an eternal kingdom.

The nations of the world need men who fear not the darkness but who will free it with a lighted torch of faith in their hands, courage in their hearts, and the fires of love in their souls.

It is when we stand on the edge of this great human frontier that we can appreciate best the meaning of the work done by those who built so well in the past. Today we are asked, in the name of faith, to be ready to sacrifice a small portion of worldly goods and comforts that would have surpassed the wildest dreams of the pioneers, for the uplifting of the race and our way of life. Having little or nothing of what we have today, they set a standard of sacrifice, courage, and achievement that should inspire us and prepare us for the supreme trials ahead.

The Church's role in our world's travails will inevitably be great if members approach the issues with Christian conviction and strength.

In his 1957 address, President Jackson said:

The church must somehow address itself to the needs and perils of Western civilization. The church must tell modern man the truth about himself. Somehow the church must get the attention of man and shock him out of his complacency and tell him that he is going in the wrong direction.

The church must tell modern man that the blind cannot lead the blind, or both will fall into a ditch; for the darkness born of human self-sufficiency is just as damnable as the primitive darkness nurtured in the broad night of ignorance and superstition.

The church must be fair with man and speak to him the truth, for this is not an hour for a soft gospel, and for a simple ethic, and for a religion that serves only the function of sleeping pills and rest cure tablets.

The Church must tell man the truth.

A Baptist can be proud when he reflects for a moment and

thinks, "That is how Hans Denck would have felt," or "That's absolutely where Roger Williams would have stood."

And a Negro Baptist can be still more proud that his denomination's voice, lifted up to all the nations on earth, grew from such a humble seed sown beside the beautiful Savannah River less than two hundred years ago, when eight communicants of the first Negro Baptist church were baptized in a mill stream "and took the Lord's Supper at Silver Bluff."

They can be equally proud of the Convention, formed by men of such great vision, that has united Negro Baptists and has given them the voice to say what is in their hearts and the strength to do God's will.

APPENDICES

AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO THE READER

Appendices to books are often a sort of graveyard where the authors (or author) quietly bury the documents they did not have time to analyze, or place dull material that is probably useless but that they were afraid to throw out.

This is a different kind of Appendix. It contains only materials that the authors believe to be alive, interesting, important, and valuable for each member of the Convention today. They haven't been afraid to throw out material that did not seem to have a real place when measured by these standards. What remains, the authors hope, will be permanently useful to you. A few of the Appendices are for reference; the others are meant for your reading interest and enjoyment.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A Charter of the National Baptist Convention, Inc.

Appendix B Constitution of the National Baptist Convention, Inc.

Appendix C "What the National Baptist Convention Stands For." Originally published by Lewis G. Jordan in *Negro Baptist History, U.S.A.*, and reproduced by the Reverend E. A. Freeman in *Epoch*

of Negro Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board.

Appendix D "The Negro's Declaration of Intention." Endorsed by the Executive Committee of the National Baptist Convention, April, 1956, and entered in the *Congressional Record*.

Appendix E Selections from Recent President's Addresses on Major Topics of Interest to the Denomination and Its Members.

1. "A Word of Caution for the American Negro," 1955.
2. "Western Civilization Still in Peril," 1956.
3. "A Plea to the White Citizens' Councils of the South," 1957.
4. "The Last Frontier of Democracy," 1957.
5. "Disintegrating Human Relations," 1958.
6. "A Message to the White House and the Nation," 1958.
7. "A Brief Word to the Negro Race," 1958.
8. "The Two-Fold Task of the American Negro," 1959.

Appendix F Note by Dr. D. C. Washington on the Sunday School Publishing Board's library.

Appendix G List of Reading Suggestions, with Comments and Annotations.

APPENDIX A

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
OF
THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dated, Washington, D. C.
April, 1915

RECEIVED FOR RECORD on the 17th day of May, A.D.
1915 at 11:04 A.M. and recorded in Liber. No. 31 Fol. 312
one of the Incorporation Records of the District of Columbia.
Deputy Recorder of Deeds, Dist. of Col.

WILFORD H. SMITH,
Attorney at Law,
150 Nassau Street
New York City

No. 13853 Recorded May 17, 1915
at 11:04 A.M.

CERTIFICATE OF INCORPORATION
OF
THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ss.

WE, the undersigned citizens of the United States, of full age, and a majority of us residents of the District of Columbia, having been authorized so to do by a resolution of the National Baptist Convention of the United States of America, theretofore an unincorporated voluntary association, being desirous of having said National Baptist Convention of the United States of America, incorporated as a membership corporation for missionary, educational and religious purposes pursuant to and in conformity with the acts of Congress and the laws of the United States providing for and regulating corporations in the District of Columbia, have associated ourselves together for the purpose of becoming a body politic and corporate, and in order that we, and those associated with us in said National Baptist Convention shall hereafter be and become in law a body politic and corporate do make, sign, acknowledge and declare this Certificate as follows

ARTICLE I.

This Association shall be known in law by the name of
“THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.”

A: This corporation shall have full power and authority to make, use and have a common seal with such device and inscription as it may deem proper, and may change or alter the same at pleasure; and shall have the right to sue and be sued at law or in equity, plead and be impleaded in any and all courts in all manner of suits, pleas, complaints, causes, matters and demands whatsoever, as fully and effectively as a natural person; and may make and adopt a Constitution and by-laws or either or both for its government and the govern-

ment of its members, and may do any and all things needful for its government and the promotion of its affairs as fully and effectively as though it were a natural person.

B: This corporation shall have the same right to take, receive, hold and enjoy all kinds of property, real, personal or mixed as fully and completely as a natural person, and may use and dispose of the same in accordance with the law and in conformity with the objects and purposes expressed in this Certificate.

C: This corporation shall take over all the rights, powers, privileges and properties, interests, control, assets, claims, demands and liabilities of the former unincorporated voluntary association heretofore known as the NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, and all the former Boards created by and under the control of the said unincorporated association, whether said Boards be incorporated or unincorporated, shall be and remain subject to and under the direction and control of this corporation, and shall in every respect be subordinate to this corporation and to its officers and directors.

ARTICLE II.

The term for which this corporation is organized shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE III.

The particular business and objects of this corporation shall be to promote the growth and propagation of religion, morality and intelligence among races of mankind by engaging in missionary work in the United States of America and upon the Continent of Africa and elsewhere, by fostering the

cause of education, and by publishing and circulating religious literature, and in providing the necessary ways and means for carrying on such work.

ARTICLE IV.

That the number of Directors who shall have the management of the affairs of this corporation for the first year of its existence shall be seven (7).

That at the first annual session of this corporation the number of such directors may be increased to such number as the corporation may decide upon, and the time, place and manner of their election shall be provided for in the by-laws.

The names and places of residence of the persons to be directors of this corporation until its first annual meeting are as follows:

<i>Names</i>	<i>Residences</i>
M. M. RODGERS	La Grange, Texas
S. E. GRIGGS	Memphis, Tennessee
C. E. PARISH	Louisville, Kentucky
W. BISHOP JOHNSON	Washington, District of Columbia
A. WILLBANKS	Washington, District of Columbia
H. POWELL	Washington, District of Columbia
M. W. D. NORMAN	Washington, District of Columbia

ARTICLE V.

In addition to the powers granted to and vested in this corporation by operation of law, this corporation is also here-

by given the express and exclusive right, authority and control over the management and properties of the following auxiliary Boards, which were heretofore created and established by the National Baptist Convention of the United States of America, prior to its incorporation, namely:

The National Baptist Publication Board, incorporated under the laws of the State of Tennessee;

The Foreign Mission Board of the National Baptist Convention, incorporated under the laws of the State of Kentucky;

The Baptist Young People's Union Board, incorporated under the laws of the State of Tennessee;

The Women's Auxiliary Board, incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia.

That said auxiliary Boards and their officers and directors shall have and exercise no power or control over the affairs and properties and said Boards independent of this corporation, and said Boards shall forthwith amend their charters so as to show that each and all of said Boards are under and subject to the jurisdiction and control of this corporation. *And this corporation shall have the exclusive right and power at its annual session, or at such other time as shall be provided in the by-laws to nominate and appoint the officers, managers or directors for each and all of said auxiliary boards.*

ARTICLE VI.

That the annual meetings of said corporation shall be held at such times and places in the United States of America as shall be provided in its by-laws, or shall be fixed by resolution of its Board of Directors.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, we have hereunto made and signed this Certificate in duplicate, and have hereunto

set our hands this 17th day of May, One thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

M. M. RODGERS
SUTTON E. GRIGGS
C. E. PARRISH
W. BISHOP JOHNSON
A. WILLBANKS
H. POWELL
M. W. D. NORMAN

APPENDIX B

REVISED CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION, U. S. A.

PREAMBLE

Whereas, it was the sense of the Negro Baptists of the United States as represented in several Baptist organizations convened in Atlanta, Georgia, September 28, 1895, and known as the Baptist Foreign Mission Convention hitherto engaged in missionary work on the west coast of Africa; the National Baptist Convention which had been doing missionary work in the United States; the National Baptist Educational Convention, charged with the educational interests of the Negro Baptists, that these organizations should unite into one organization for the purpose of putting into effect the benevolent intentions of their constituents by eliciting, combining and directing the energies of the denomination; therefore, said organization did unite and agree upon certain fundamental principles and organic rules, which as amended from time to time, as follows:

ARTICLE I — NAME

This organization shall be known and styled as the National Baptist Convention of the United States of America.

ARTICLE II — OBJECT

This Convention by uniting Baptist Churches and other Bap-

tist organizations, such as may desire an organization of this kind, shall undertake to promote home and foreign missions; to encourage and support Christian education; to publish and distribute Sunday-school and other religious literature; and to engage in whatever other Christian endeavor is required to advance the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the world.

ARTICLE III — MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of this Convention shall be representative, annual and life.

Section 2. Representative membership shall be had in this Convention by Baptist churches, district associations and conventions, district state conventions, and state conventions, all known to be in harmony with the object of this Convention, by paying into the treasury of this Convention at the annual meetings thereof, such sums as are stated in Section 3 of this Article; provided that any of the above mentioned organizations that have contributed money to any of the Boards of this annual meeting may have upon additional representation for ten (\$10.00) dollars, thus contributed upon presentation of an official receipt for same.

Section 3. Any regular Baptist church shall be entitled to one (1) messenger upon the payment of ten (\$10.00) dollars; any district association or convention, to one (1) messenger upon the payment of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars; any district state convention to one (1) messenger upon payment of fifty (\$50.00) dollars; any state convention, to one (1) messenger upon payment of one hundred (\$100.00) dollars provided that any or all of the above mentioned organizations may be entitled to one (1) additional messenger for every additional five (\$5.00) dollars paid, all of which shall be for the work of this Convention. (See Amendment).

Section 4. Messengers representing district associations, district or state conventions, shall be elected at the annual meeting of these organizations for the session of this Convention next following such an election and said election shall be regularly certified to the secretary of this Convention, so that said messengers may participate in the annual meeting of this Convention.

Section 5. Any person who is a member of a missionary Baptist church known to be in harmony with the objects of this Convention, and who is in good and regular standing with said church may become a life member of this Convention upon the payment of one hundred (\$100.00) dollars at any session of this Convention provided that any person with the same qualifications may upon the payment of ten (\$10.00) dollars at any session of this Convention, become an annual member thereof.

ARTICLE IV — OFFICERS AND THEIR ELIGIBILITY

Section 1. The officers of this Convention shall be a president, a vice-president-at-large, three (3) regional vice-presidents, and a vice-president from each of the states and territories from which messengers to this Convention may come, a secretary, four (4) assistant secretaries, a treasurer, a statistician, a historiographer, an editor, and an attorney, all of whom shall be elected at each annual meeting of this Convention and shall hold office until their successors shall have been elected.

Section 2. The Convention shall have the right to try the officers of the Executive Board and to dismiss them.

Section 3. Any messenger in good and regular standing with any church holding membership in this Convention, provided

that he possesses sufficient learning and ability to insure competency for the position to which he aspires.

ARTICLE V — BOARDS

Section 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS. The Board of Directors shall consist of the president, vice-president-at-large, the three regional vice-presidents, the vice-presidents elected by the Convention, from the various states and territories represented at each annual session, the secretary, the treasurer, the attorney, the editor, historiographer, statistician, and the assistant secretaries of the Convention; fifteen of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The Board of Directors shall organize by electing a chairman and a secretary, who shall perform the duties usually assigned to like officers. It may, if so desired, create from among its own body such sub-committees as it may deem proper and make such rules and regulations not inconsistent with the Constitution of this Convention as it may deem necessary.

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to complete the unfinished business of the Convention; and to adjust such matters as may be referred to it by the Convention and to fill any vacancies which may occur in the roster of the Convention, to nominate and fix the time and place of the meeting; to enforce the orders of the Convention or any of its Boards; to examine and pass on, and recommend all claims against the Convention; and during the recess of the Convention have entire charge of its affairs.

Executive Committee of Board of Directors. There shall be an Executive Committee of nine (9) consisting of the president, secretary, treasurer and six others whose duty it shall be to look after any unfinished business of the Board of Directors or of the Convention, and to transact any urgent matters de-

manding immediate attention of the Board, and report same to the Board of Directors.

The chairman and corresponding secretaries of the several Boards shall be accorded the floor of the Board of Directors and the privilege to speak on and discuss all questions, but not to vote.

The Board of Directors shall meet at 8:30 a.m., the first day of the Convention: first, for more perfectly arranging for the sessions of the Convention; second, to hear any suggestions from any state convention looking to the good of the work of the Convention; third, the newly elected Board shall meet during the recesses or after the adjournment of the Convention to wind up any unfinished business of the Convention.

Section 2. OTHER BOARDS. The work of this Convention shall be done by Boards. There shall be elected at each annual meeting as many Boards as may be necessary to carry out the objects which this Convention may undertake to foster, all of the members and officers of which Boards may remain in office until their successors shall have been elected. Each of these Boards shall consist of one member from each state or territory from which messengers to this Convention may come, and eight (8) additional members from which the state or territory in which the Board is located, provided that the twenty-four (24) members of the Controlling Board and the four (4) members of the Holding Board of the American Baptist Theological Seminary, and who are appointed by this Convention according to the plan of cooperation between the Southern Baptist Convention and this Convention, and by which plan said Theological Seminary is operated, shall by virtue of their office, be, and the same are hereby made members of the Educational Board of this Convention and provided further that a Board of Managers may be constituted under this section for the purpose of conducting the affairs of the national organ of this Con-

vention, and that the status of said Board of Managers shall be the same as that of other Boards of this Convention. Each Board is hereby given power to nominate its own officers; and to appoint its own employees, subject to the approval of the Convention or the Board of Directors.

The compensation of its officers and employees shall be fixed by the Boards. But the salaries of the officers of the Boards shall be passed upon by the Board of Directors, and before becoming effective shall be ratified by the Executive Board of this Convention. During the interim of the Convention, each Board shall have sole management of the affairs connected with the business for which it is created; but such management shall be in strict accordance with the constituted provision adopted by this Convention and with such other instructions as may be given by the Board of Directors of the Convention or by the Convention. Each Board is hereby authorized to make its own by-laws and to fill any vacancy occurring in its membership during the interim of this Convention. But all such by-laws must be in harmony with the laws and regulations of and approved by the Convention.

ARTICLE VI — DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. The duties of the officers of this Convention shall be in general terms, such as recognized custom devolves upon them, and which are suggested or indicated by the name of the office together with such other duties as may be required by them by this Convention.

Section 2. The treasurer of this Convention shall issue a receipt for all money turned over to him and shall pay out the same only upon order signed by the president and attested by the secretary. At each annual meeting he shall submit a written itemized report of receipts and disbursements.

Section 3. An auditor shall make annual examination and audits of books and accounts of all Boards of the Convention and such officers that have the handling of the finances of this Convention. For this purpose he shall have full and free access to all books and records in the custody of the same and shall report his findings to this Convention at its annual meetings. But nothing in this section shall be so construed as to prevent Boards and officers involved from having a survey and audit of their accounts when in their judgment such a survey and audit may be necessary.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the statistician to gather statistical data for the denomination as represented by the Convention by procuring such statistics from churches, district associations, and state conventions participating in this Convention and from denominational schools within the domains of this Convention as will contribute to this end, and report the same to this Convention, annually.

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the historiographer to gather all historical data bearing on the rise and progress of the National Baptist Convention and publish the same. He shall work in harmony with all Boards in pursuance of the ends set out above.

ARTICLE VII — SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Section 1. The Women's Convention, Auxiliary to the National Baptist Convention, Sunday School and B. Y. P. U. Congress, and the Baptist Laymen's movement are and the same are hereby recognized as subsidiary bodies to the Convention. These subsidiary bodies shall work in harmony with this Convention, contributing as they are able to the general needs of said Convention.

Section 2. The subsidiary bodies shall make annual reports

to this Convention and said reports are hereby subject to the approval of said Convention.

ARTICLE VIII

All Board members and missionaries and agents appointed by this Convention or by any of its Boards shall be members of some church in union with the churches composing this Convention.

ARTICLE IX

The churches, district associations, state conventions and other Baptist organizations composing this Convention, shall have the right to specify, the object or objects of which their contributions shall be applied. But when this right has not been exercised the Convention shall make the appropriation at its own discretion.

ARTICLE X

Missionaries appointed by this Convention or by any of the Boards must, previous to their appointment, furnish evidence of genuine piety, fervent zeal in the Master's cause and talents which fit them for the service for which they offer themselves.

ARTICLE XI

There shall be an annual meeting of this Convention, the same to be held at the time and order stated in the by-laws of this Convention.

This Constitution may be altered or amended at any annual

session by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that such a vote is taken without regard to the total enrollment, and provided further that no amendments may be considered after the second day of the session. All amendments before being presented to the Convention for adoption, must have been presented to the Executive Board of this Convention for its consideration.

All constitutions and laws or parts of constitutions and laws in conflict with this Constitution are hereby repealed and are of no force and effect.

This Constitution shall take effect upon its adoption.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The committee considered Article V, Section 1, of the Constitution with reference to the Executive Committee, and recommended that the above Article V, and Section 1, shall be so amended as to read:

“The Board of Directors shall have power to create from its own body an Executive Committee consisting of nine members to wit: President, secretary, treasurer, and six others to be selected out of the Board, with full power and authority to transact such business as may be referred to it by the Board reporting their action in detail to the directors for information and approval. The Executive Committee shall not have power to transact any new business not referred to it by the Board of Directors.”

Further;

The office of auditor is hereby discontinued.

The following Constitutional amendments were presented by the Board of Directors and approved by the Parent Body in the September 1939 Session at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Article III, Section 2—Amended to read: Churches shall be entitled to one additional messenger for every additional five (\$5.00) dollars paid.

Article IV, Section 2—This article reads “The work of this Convention shall be done by Boards.” Amended, “The work of this Convention shall be done by Boards subject to the will of the Convention.”

Article VI, Section 2—Further the article states, “The compensation of its officers and employees shall be fixed by the Boards, etc.” Amended to read, “The compensation of officers and employees of Boards shall be fixed by the Boards, subject to review and approval by the Board of Directors whenever it is deemed necessary.”

Article VII, Section 1—Amended by changing “B. Y. P. U.” to “B. T. U.”

AMENDMENT—ARTICLE VIII

Article III, Section 3—MEMBERSHIP amended to read as follows: That any regular Baptist church with a membership of 200 or less shall be entitled to one (1) messenger upon the payment of ten (\$10.00) dollars; from 200 to 500 members, one (1) messenger upon the payment of fifteen dollars (\$15.00); all over 500 members, one messenger upon the payment of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars; any district association or convention, one (1) messenger upon the payment of thirty-five (\$35.00) dollars; any district state convention, one (1) messenger upon the payment of fifty (\$50.00) dollars; any state convention, one (1) messenger upon the payment of one hundred fifty (\$150.00) dollars provided that any or all of the above mentioned organizations may be entitled to one (1) additional messenger for every additional five (\$5.00) dollars paid, all of which shall be for the work of this Convention.

APPENDIX C

WHAT THE NATIONAL BAPTIST CONVENTION STANDS FOR

This is a summary of the Baptists' position, which will give the reader a bird's-eye view of what holds Negro Baptists together. These principles have been generally accepted among Negro Baptists, but no formal action by the Convention was ever taken at any one session. However, at different times as they arose as issues formal action may have been taken on some of them.

As a denomination, Baptists have some principles—tenets which distinguish them—set apart from all others. Among them are:

(1) That the New Testament, in its entirety, comprises the whole rule and guide for humanity through the light of the Holy Spirit and not the Old Testament.

(2) That the acts and sayings of Jesus Christ should neither be added to, as in forms, rituals, etc., nor subtracted from by any omissions, from what Christ as Law-giver practiced and commanded. Baptists, therefore, do not administer circumcision, do not sprinkle, nor do they baptize infants. (See Rev. 22:19.)

(3) Baptists believe in individual responsibility, with no intervention between the soul and its God; that all believers are priests and may come directly to God in confession of their sins, may praise Him and ask guidance. They have always opposed the union of church and state for this reason, and have contended always for religious

freedom, standing up for the right of each individual to worship God as his conscience directs. A child may inherit of its parents, big or small feet, flat or sharp nose, good or bad disposition, but never their religion. Religion is a matter between God and the soul.

(4) That since Christ himself sanctioned the baptism of believers only, the church is only for saved persons, and that infants are not included in this category. They cite the accounts of the households of Cornelius, Crispus and the jailer (Acts 16:31-34).

(5) That the New Testament, not church but churches were independent and self-governing with no general body ruling the local church. Messengers sent from cooperating churches to said general bodies come in a purely advisory capacity. Each church has absolute control over its own membership. Baptist churches of today are the same democratic organization that the New Testament shows them to be in their origin.

(6) That they know from the New Testament that immersion is baptism, just as they know from the Bible that there is a God. Just as they know that there were believers and churches, even so they know that immersion came before the sacrament.

(7) That baptism is the use of water in one particular way: viz. immersion, embodying three fundamental ideas—Christ's death—the regeneration of the soul buried with him by baptism and raised to walk with him in the newness of life, and the final resurrection of the body—a prophecy (John 15:14).

(8) That bread and wine used in the sacrament are only as symbols of the body and the blood of Christ, that it simply represents his flesh and blood and that the only blessing which comes from obedience to his com-

mand and from thinking upon the significance of these pictures.

(9) That unbaptized persons must not be invited to the Lord's supper, and members of Baptist churches are not to partake of the sacrament when administered by unbaptized persons. They contend that every time baptism is mentioned it follows immediately after profession of faith, and comes before the Lord's Supper. The Samaritans believed Philip and were baptized at once (Acts 8:12). Paul was baptized as soon as he received his sight (Acts 9:18). The jailer was baptized the same hour of the night (Acts 16:38).

(10) Baptists believe that they should give 'the whole gospel to the whole world' and that since they are strong in doctrine fulfilling the law, as does no other denomination, mightier in number, so they are required to be more powerful in deeds of righteousness in home and foreign lands; giving systematically and weekly as the 'Lord has prospered' is just as Scriptural as baptism—for—'by their fruits ye shall know them' and 'unto whomsoever much is given to him much is required.'

(11) Then the National Baptist Convention stands for all the Bible sanctions as interpreted in the 'Articles of Faith' and our 'Baptist Church Covenant.'

(12) The National Baptist Convention, like Roger Williams and all Baptist forbearers, is against the union of church and state and is in favor of the constitution of our country including the 13th, 14th, 15th and 18th amendments.

(13) The National Baptist Convention stands for the Christianization of our homeland and the highest efficiency of all the people through the preaching of the gospel and Christian education.

(14) The National Baptist Convention stands for the evangelization of all lands in general, Africa, the West Indies, and Latin America in particular, where it now maintains workers.

(15) The National Baptist Convention stands for the ownership and absolute control of all boards and agencies created or authorized to function in its name. All property acquired by these boards and agencies is secured for and in the name of the National Baptist Convention of the United States of America.

APPENDIX D

THE NEGRO'S DECLARATION OF INTENTION

PREFACE

After conferring with Negro citizens from all walks of life in all parts of the country; the writer has put together in his own words, the impressions gained in the form of this Declaration of Intention. There have been interviews of college presidents and professors, high school principals and teachers, and ministers of religion in the different denominations of the country. Doctors, lawyers, labor leaders and students in high school and college, are also included. Farmers, day laborers, and the men on the street have expressed their opinions.

There has been an attempt on the part of the Gallup Poll to gather data as to the thoughts and reaction of Negroes to the present struggles that they face. In recent days, many questions have been raised about the new wave of terror sweeping the Southland.

Many people in Europe, including Russia, as well as those in Africa and South America, and the Isles of the sea, are concerned about the basic reaction of the Negro population. Will they remain loyal, or will they turn communist?

It was the writer's opinion that some kind of expression, of outlook, aims and purpose would be of untold value. Hence, this Declaration of Intention.

DECLARATION

1. At all times, WE INTEND to support the Federal Constitution, to obey the laws of the land, to avoid contempt of courts, and to respect the judgments and decrees of the Supreme Court of the United States of Amreica, and to always abide by the same.
2. Whatever is asid or done against the United States of America by enemies, foreign and domestic; we will ever oppose with all of our heart, mind, body, soul and strength.
3. WE INTEND to continue to teach our children that this nation is a great free republic of law and order, with a system of government *Of the People, By the People, and For the People*. And any person who disobeys the laws of the land and teaches others to do so, is a declared enemy of this nation, and is working for its overthrow; and hence, does not deserve the right of free participation in the nation's life, and is unworthy of the security that the country gives, and is subject to the penalties of the law. We shall also teach our children that this nation under God, was founded in the spirit of justice, freedom, and due regard for moral law, and cannot survive without remaining true to its foundation principles.
4. WE INTEND to participate in the total cultural life of the nation, both for personal growth and development, and for the further progress of the country itself.
5. WE INTEND always, to cherish and to give thanks for those natural endowments and special gifts that have made our race great; and pledge all of our talents and resources in the building of a better social order and a more democratic world.

6. In spite of the doctrine of the segregationist, we shall always believe that the basic quality of real distinction, is character not color; and the stature of a person is determined by the power of his mind, the purity of his heart, and the highest possible dedication of his life.
7. WE INTEND to crusade against all the evils in our society that are designed to poison creative human relationships, and to crush the constructive growth of human personality, and to fight against the false doctrine which claims that some men are by origin, birth and nature, superior to others.
8. While we shall recognize a need for the patience that accompanies growth, WE INTEND at all times, to reject that doctrine of gradualism which implies that the established laws of the land should be gradually applied, and gradually obeyed, in order to respect the unjust traditions of men, and to give free reign and honor to destructive prejudices.
9. WE INTEND to take every legal step to employ every constructive measure, and to cooperate with every group of loyal Americans in the struggle to preserve all of the nation's ideals, and to overcome every economic, political and cultural stumbling block that hinders the further progress of this great republic.
10. With love for our nation, goodwill toward all, utter devotion to the Federal Constitution, and undying faith in God; WE INTEND to continue our struggle for the complete victory of freedom on every front, and the preservation of the soul of the nation whatever the cost; AND, if we are slain by the forces of oppression before our high purpose is achieved; we pray that we shall sleep under the shadows of the flag that we love, and that our flowing blood shall help to wash from the

nation's life, every blot of shame; and our bleached bones shall help to fertilize our hallowed soil for those who come after us; and our sacred dust shall be a silent testimony and a lasting memorial to our eternal quest for justice, peace and goodwill.

APPENDIX E-1

A WORD OF CAUTION FOR THE AMERICAN NEGRO

THE LEGAL ASPECT OF OUR STRUGGLE

As a group, let us not forget that there are several angles to the great struggle of which we are a vital part. There is the legal aspect, and there is the aspect of good-will. Both are vitally important. As the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has demonstrated across the years, we can and must seek our rights through the due process of law. America has a constitution. It is one of the greatest documents on human freedom ever to be penned by the hands of man. In it is a promise of justice to all citizens, and in it is the hope of our democratic way of life. We must remain law abiding citizens, and seek to reach our goals through the agencies of the courts of the land. At this point there must be no compromise. We must fight our legal battles without fear and without reservations. This fight is more important to America as a nation, than it is to us as a race, for America shall never gain the respect she deserves and needs among the peoples of Asia, until the legal battle has been won to set all citizens free, and to remove once and forever the caste of color and segregation based on race or national origin.

THE ASPECT OF GOOD-WILL

But there is another aspect of this struggle that is not be-

neath, but above the law, and that is the aspect of good-will and understanding. Because we have gained some victories on the legal front, and because there are certain age old barriers crumbling before the power of justice and the force of democracy, let us not for once, believe that the day for good-will among the races has passed. Whether we live North or South, we must practice the good neighbor policy with men and women of other racial and cultural groups. This is not the time for us as a race to put all of our trust in the legal power that is available for us. We must not resort to economic boycott or any other destructive measure, the result of which would be far more deadly to the minority than to the majority group. Much has been accomplished through good-will. Among the minority groups of the South, there has been developed a spirit of fellowship that we must continue to nurture and to develop. No court of the land can successfully guide and superintend good-will and a good neighbor policy, no supreme court can build up between peoples of the same community the interest and the personal respect each for the other that the principles of Christ demand. It is right to accumulate wealth and to organize capital for the well-being of our race and our community, but let us not put confidence in organized capital or organized protest, in our effort to build better human relations. Let us remember that tolerance and patience must still be some of the virtues of those who live in an incomplete but growing democratic society. The Supreme Court has spoken regarding segregation in the elementary schools of the United States of America. We can do nothing less as a race, than to be obedient to the verdict of this high court. But let us not become bitter as we face the hard struggle of practical application of this great decision. Of course we must not, we cannot, and we will not turn back from the task that we have so nobly begun. But we will be ever conscious of the fact that what the

law demands, good-will and understanding can more creatively achieve. The Christian Church must do well its task in helping men of all minority groups as well as those of majority groups to work out their democratic salvation, not with fear and trembling, but with courage and confidence; for we as a race, do not desire, and we will not seek to destroy any of the noble virtues of the members of the majority group. We can and must work together, to achieve the highest possible degree of freedom and understanding in a spirit of good-will. Oh, the good that men can accomplish through the instrumentalities of good-will. Good-will has never sunk a ship nor released rockets of death, or dropped bombs of deadly destruction. Good-will has never led an army in the field of slaughter, or destroyed the homes of the innocent. Good-will has never wrecked a city, it has never destroyed temples of learning, and wrecked church houses and cathedrals. Good-will has never pulled down the flag of another nation, or dragged its honor in the dust.

Good-will has saved the wretched, lifted the broken in spirit, and taught the strong to respect the weak. Good-will has led men to judge human personalities not on the basis of color, but on the basis of character. In our haste to achieve the goals that we desire, let us always remember the creative value of good-will.

PRAISE FOR NEGRO TEACHERS

In the present struggle of integration, the Negro teachers stand in the front line of battle. They have been the heroes in the struggle, and for the next quarter of a century, they will be called upon to bear much of the burden in the heat of the day. Let us not overlook the sacrifices and the creative contributions that are being made by this noble host of intellectual

and cultural leaders. When the school terms opened last fall, these teachers returned to their post, believing in the law, and yet moving forward in a spirit of good-will. I urge upon them to continue their noble task. Their special job is the education of all young people entrusted to them. Leave the speeches of demigods to those who have no other task, and delegate the job of cursing to those whose lips have not been trained for higher things; but let our teachers stick to their task and continue to give of themselves and of their talent in the interest of an enlightened and improved society. Turn not to the right or the left to answer those who criticize you. Make no apology for living in the community in which you serve, for yours is a great task, and the fruits of your struggle shall yet bless this nation; although your eyes may never see the full result of your noble efforts.

NEGROES MUST HELP EACH OTHER

Let us remember as a people, that in addition to our struggle to achieve our rights, we have a task of developing more fully our virtues and of preserving the little values that we have already acquired. Let us become big enough to cease our civil war each against the other, and let Negroes learn to sacrifice and to help other Negroes grow and come to power. This is a task that requires joint participation and organized effort. Let preachers, businessmen, lawyers, doctors and newspaper publishers, join hands in the effort to make our race a better and more refined group in these United States. We must remember that in addition to the proclamation of our vices, we need somebody also to tell the story of our virtues. If there be among us people of promise and leaders of talent, let us proclaim it. If the Negro deserves the right to live in these United States as a first class citizen, then let the public know

that he is worthy, and we must not sell his reputation for fifteen cents a heap, or twenty pennies a copy. We will need the public press to help us break our chains, to leave a low and unsightly past, and rise higher in the scale of manhood and womanhood where we may take our places as true citizens of this republic, and as worthy soldiers in America's army of democracy.

But, it is not enough for us to maintain ourselves; our task is greater, and our concern must embrace all the problems affecting mankind in this day and generation.

APPENDIX E-2

WESTERN CIVILIZATION STILL IN PERIL

The future and the fate of Western Civilization still hang in the balance. Nations continue to test dangerous explosives and are building stock piles of deadly bombs, and much of the genius of modern science is today harnessed to the task of inventing new weapons of human slaughter. Nations are still clinging to the old ideas of security through subjugation, conquest, and oppression. However benevolent it may seem, England's colonial policy is still intact. France is still determined to keep alive as long as possible her dying empire. In spite of Russia's new look and in spite of a more friendly attitude towards the West, there are still indications that the basic purpose of Russian communism has not been changed. She still holds in chains many of the peoples whom she has conquered, and she has not consented as yet to the unification of Germany. In spite of the lessening of tension between the United States and Russia, there is still a fear and a mistrust which lead the statesmen to continue preparation for a possible war. Russia and the United States, the two most powerful nations on the globe today, have not as yet solved their problems and still show much hostility each toward the other. The statesmen from each nation carry on their propaganda to gain the loyalty and support of the nations of the world. It seems that Russia is still winning diplomatic victories and gaining more support from the nations of the world. It seems that the United States is not making the desired progress on the international front. This doubtless is due in part to the fact that so

many nations doubt America's sincerity. They fear America's power and interpret her diplomacy in terms of economic aggression and political domination. Maybe this attitude grows out of a misunderstanding of America's purpose and intention. I fear the United States has put too much faith in her wealth in dealing with other people. She has developed what is commonly called by some a DOLLAR diplomacy. It is a diplomacy based on the use of our money and economic resources to win and hold the loyalty of other nations. Such a diplomacy can become very cold and offensive to other people. No nation cherishes the idea of becoming the debtor to another nation. Such diplomacy creates the wrong conception of working relations between the nations. It becomes a relation of the possessed to the dispossessed, that of the haves to the have-nots, that of the rich to the poor, the powerful to the weak, which is virtually the same as the old relation of master and slave. The peoples of the world have long since been in revolt against this type of relationship. Nations, like people, are in quest of friends and neighbors and are not seeking lords and masters. Many are the illustrations of weaknesses and in some cases the tragic failures of this policy. After World War I when the United States sought to collect its just war debt from Great Britain, the United States was considered by some of the leaders of Britain as a Shylock demanding his pound of flesh. The money relationship between these two strong allies created a tense and most unpleasant situation.

During World War II the United States through lend-lease extended money and material gifts to the Soviet Union to whom we were joined at that time as a faithful ally. But the struggles of this dreadful war were scarcely over before the United States had been repudiated by the Soviet Union and regarded as an enemy to be rejected and feared.

It was this same type of diplomacy that occasioned our loss

of the friendship of Japan which finally led to the dreadful struggle in the Pacific which began with the tragic destruction of Pearl Harbor. The same story may be told of the loss of China, one of our former allies, and the great hostility against this country among the Arab states. Possibly one of the most shameful examples of the failure of our DOLLAR diplomacy came to world attention last June when the United States was rebuked by the little country of Iceland and was virtually kicked out of the country. As one travels among the peoples of the world one may hear on ships, in ports, and in the capitals of the respective countries expressions of animosity and hostility toward the United States of America. In spite of our good intentions and our abundance of wealth, this nation seems to be one of the most hated on the globe.

Of course I am not a diplomat and have not the wisdom of our statesmen, but it seems to me this country needs a new type of diplomacy. This new diplomacy must relate not what America possesses, but what America is—a free, independent, and liberty loving nation—to what other peoples are, in such a way that they will be encouraged in their aspirations for a most complete self-respect and the highest possible goal of self-fulfillment and self-determination.

Russia has not possessed our economic advantage and has been forced to rely on a diplomacy based on what she is—a communist state and on her assumed friendship for the oppressed peoples of the globe. Hence she has made rapid strides in rallying to her standard many of the struggling countries of the world.

But neither the American nor the Russian diplomacy alone can save Western Civilization. It cannot be saved by the modern discoveries of science or by new weapons of destruction. What can save Western Civilization? I answer only the right application of the moral and spiritual forces of the universe.

Science has wrought well. She has increased our speed and forced the peoples of the world into closer contact. But science has not taught modern men how to live together as neighbors and as brothers. Nations must learn today the right use of all they possess, the right relationships between human beings, and how to deal with each individual as a sacred unit in human society and as a child of God. These moral and spiritual forces of the universe must be given their rightful place in all of our international relationships, in our political and economic agreements, and must be respected in the parliaments and congresses of the world. Communist Russia openly defies the significance of the moral and spiritual forces of the universe and seeks to build her world empire without reference to righteousness, goodness, and truth and in open defiance of the name of God. The United States of America does not deny the theory of the significance of these moral and spiritual forces but often disregards them in practical situations. The leaders of Western Civilization have gone as far as possible without a moral and spiritual cleansing. The next move must be up or down. Our present civilization shall either fall into the pit of human corruption and into the hell of divine judgment, or it must rise on wings of faith to a new height of moral and spiritual refinement and receive pardon for the sins of the past and an extension of the unearned mercies of God.

The key to the future then is religion, and the hope of Western Civilization is the practice of justice, goodness, love, and truth. We had hoped that the United States of America would maintain its moral leadership of the free world and be the means of preserving modern civilization from decay and death. But America herself is now caught in an awful crisis that has greatly imperiled if not already destroyed her claims to moral leadership in this great struggle.

APPENDIX E-3

A PLEA TO THE WHITE CITIZENS' COUNCILS OF THE SOUTH

On July 11th, 1954, upon the call of Mr. Robert Patterson, fourteen men met in the home of Mr. D. H. Hawkins, in Indianola, Mississippi and organized the first white citizens' council of the South. The purpose of this organization was to oppose and work against the implementation of the Supreme Court's Decision of May 17, 1954 outlawing segregation in public education. Since that eventful night these councils have sprung up all over the South, and according to the report of Mr. John Bartlow Martin in an article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, June 15, 1957, they have already won their battle against this historic decision. For in many places, lawyers and doctors, religious leaders and the better class of white citizens of the South have joined heart and hand to carry out their purpose against the highest court in the land. In many cases they have used the weapon of economic boycott and intimidations; and in some cases, violence has been done against the helpless Negroes of the community. Some leading white citizens who have differed with the White Citizens' Council have also been pressured, and many have bowed to the mandates of this group. This is an organization within the state itself and is a government within a government. It seems that these councils have not only taken the law in their own hands, but in many respects they have become a law unto themselves, sitting in judgment on the innocent, punishing the helpless and the weak, and setting up their own standards in opposition to the voice

and vote of the highest court of the land. We know well if the victory of the White Citizens' Council stands, the verdict of the Supreme Court must be defeated; and if this is the case, democracy fails and our great republic is brought into disrepute. What then, is our plea to the White Citizens' Council?

First, can we not trust the laws of our land? Are there values in our culture that will not be preserved intact if we obey the courts and live according to the principles of the Federal Constitution? Why do you fear the Negroes of your community? The great majority of them seek not your hurt, and are not desirous of possessing that which rightfully belongs to you. They simply desire the best possible education, the best possible jobs, and the best possible security for themselves and their family. They are not your enemies, and they do not desire to be. They desire to exercise all of their God-given rights under the Stars and Stripes.

Members of the White Citizens' Council, before you boast of your victory and take too much pride in the battle you have won, ask yourself the question, "what have you gained that you did not have before?" You had control of the courts, judges and juries, the banks, the economic resources, and the political patronage and power of the South. You have gained nothing more in the victory of the White Citizens' Council. In your victory, the poor white citizens of the South are no richer, and their children are given no better economic advantage and cultural opportunities.

The cultural level of the South in this act has been lifted no higher. Education is no finer, and your communities not one bit safer against the crimes and evil deeds of white criminals. White criminals are still robbing banks, kidnapping children and slaying the innocent and helpless. *White Citizens' Councils*, what abiding victory have you gained? You have not increased your political power and influence in the nation.

The number of your Congressmen and your Senators is the same, and in many instances you still lag behind other sections of the country both in political power, economic resources and the quality of education. Members of the victorious White Citizens' Council, what have you destroyed in your pseudo victory? In many cases you have destroyed respect for law and order, and you live in open contempt of the highest court of the land, and you are teaching your sons and daughters to do the same.

What is the future of a nation whose citizens accept a criminal act as a virtue, and a sin against the Federal Constitution as acts of righteousness and heroic deeds to be praised? There are many white men of the South today who are less free than they were before the night your council began. Remember, honorable sir, he who makes chains for others must first of all bind his own soul with cords of hate and fetters of envy and strife. He who would hold others in prison must himself live a prisoner's life and find his place behind bolts and bars. You have already victimized your sons and daughters with a false interpretation of human life, and have deceived them into thinking that color is a content of character and position is an essential part of lofty personality, and they fear almost daily the ghost of insecurity that your doctrine of segregation has created, and many of them will go through life looking for a type of greatness that they shall never find or enjoy. Remember, ye members of the distinguished White Citizens' Council of the South, that this is a moral universe, and moral law has its place, and force and oppression have never won an abiding victory, and prejudice has never given birth to the child of lofty principles and segregation has never added one element of truth and righteousness to the segregators. Remember that time and history are on the side of right, and every man somehow, in this wide uni-

verse, must reap what he sows. If a defenseless King Duncan is slain, a Lady Macbeth must writhe and weep because she cannot wash the innocent blood from guilty hands. Intrinsic values do not depend on the destruction of human personality, and true worth never relies on tragic wrongs. The democratic way of life dictates that we obey the laws on the statute books until they are repealed, and accept the verdicts of the courts until the rulings have been reversed, or we must be classed with law-breakers and criminals and un-desirable subversives working for the overthrow of the American government. Therefore, America is fighting the battle of freedom today on the last frontier of democracy.

APPENDIX E-4

THE LAST FRONTIER OF DEMOCRACY

America is known in history as the country of vanishing frontiers. At first a few scattered colonies on the Atlantic seaboard constituted the very heart of the new community. All of the rest was unknown swamps and unconquered wilderness infested with hostile red men and lurking germs of dreadful diseases. But step by step the pioneers braved the threats, endured the solitude and faced the dangers of death and continued their westward march until the last physical American frontier was pushed into the sea.

But today there remains still another frontier. It is a threat to America's security and a deadly enemy to the cause of freedom. This last frontier is not confined to foreign soil, neither is it the point where the military might of Russia confronts the boundary lines of the countries of the West. It is not the Mason and Dixon line that divides this country roughly into North and South; for in many respects, North is South and South is North. It is not in the field of geography, but in the realm of axiology and within the confines of psychology. This last frontier of democracy is that attitude of mind among human beings that leads them to destroy the sacred rights of others and to ignore the divine quality of every human personality. It is that attitude of mind which for the cheap testimony of prejudice, men will find an excuse for building around the lives of worthy people the hindering and hampering walls of segregation, to the detriment of both the segregator and the segregated. This last frontier must be conquered and

subdued, or the cause of democracy is lost. And if this sacred cause is lost, we shall see the hallowed flag of this great Republic lowered to the dust of shame, and her honored laws trampled beneath criminal feet, and the sacred halls of our Congress shall be filled with traitors whose hands are stained with the blood of the innocent, and whose souls are haunted by the groans of the slaughtered. And justice shall lay wounded in the streets of our cities, and the rattle of the shackles of slavery shall be heard above the once golden notes of patriotic hymns, and the ugly and tyrannical demons of force shall dispel the longed for beauty of freedom. The battle to destroy segregation and discrimination, and to give full and unrestricted freedom to every deserving person under the stars, is America's battle; and we are fighting today on this last frontier.

As colored Americans, we deserve our rights; we desire our rights, and we will always struggle to get our rights. But more than our rights as a race, we must struggle to help win the battle of America. The respect for the courts of the land, the keeping of our laws, and the holding high all the lofty principles of the Federal Constitution is America's responsibility. This nation must practice freedom, and preserve the principles of democracy, and give every citizen his full right to vote and his right to live, and his right to security. Civil rights and the right to an education, in fact all the rights that are germane to freedom, rest upon America and with America. This is America's battle, and we must help America to win this battle. Our honored flag, the symbol of freedom and the expression of our devotion to truth and our respect for human personality, must forever float in the breeze. But there are unkind, wicked and nefarious hands reaching for the flag. They pull at it with intense desire, and would move it from its lofty place. Men who parade in robes of infamy, behind hoods of disgrace,

are seeking to lower the flag of America's respectability to the dust. Men who organize themselves against the Supreme Court's Decisions and teach others to do so, it matters not who they are; whether they be Governors of states, Senators in Washington's holy assembly, or criminals of the deepest die, all of these are trying to haul down America's flag and bring the nation's character into disrepute. But we as a people have joined with all of the liberty-loving citizens of this nation in our resolute determination that such wicked hands must be stayed, and these criminal designs off-set, and the enemies of freedom put down. The flag must not be surrendered, and the emblems of democracy must never touch the ground. For this flag we have sailed the bloody seas of two world wars. In the interest of this flag our soldiers died on the beachheads of Italy and on the Islands of Japan, and in fox holes in Germany, and our sons and daughters have poured out their life blood and have left their bleached bones on the scattered battlefields of the world. In this crucial hour when enemies within are laboring to defeat the Democratic purposes of this nation, we shall not desert our land. We shall stay with our country, as our sons and daughters have died to preserve the nation's glory, we shall live to sustain its cause and to hold high our flag in spite of shot and shell.

We know the struggle is hard and the journey is long, but we will not despair. We await the help of that immortal Spirit of Freedom.

Spirit of Freedom, how long must we yet live in the valley of despair and in a haunting state of dread? How long must prejudice blind the minds of men, darken understanding, and drive bright-eyed wisdom from her sacred throne? O Spirit of Freedom how long must there be continued man's inhumanity to man, the domination of the strong over the weak, and the conquest of the poor by the rich, and the slaugh-

ter of the innocent by the guilty. And when will wounded Justice, now prostrate in the streets of cities, be lifted from the dust of shame to reign supreme among the children of men? Spirit of Freedom, child of destiny, and daughter of love, hold high your torch of hope in this dark hour of despair, and push your guiding star out upon the nocturnal bosom of this gloomy night, and pluck from weary souls the chains of fear and the manacles of death, and open wide the prison house of cursed discrimination and let God's people go. We are concerned, and we are weary of the burdens we bear and the afflictions we endure. But we have not lost hope, for we believe the past holds for us evidences of our strength and signs of your victory. And hence, we believe the hour of complete victory is nearer now. For it is historically true that frequently the darkest hour is before the break of day, and the deepest shadow, before the crack of dawn.

It was indeed a dark night in the tragic days of slavery, when one man inspired of God and overcome by the spirit of freedom, signed the immortal document that removed from the bodies of four million captives the rags of slavery and the fetters of shame and set them on the long and tedious road towards full American citizenship. Though the goal is not fully reached, we are still traveling on, and we will reach our goal some day.

It was midnight in Egypt when the fury and persecution of Pharaoh was at its worst and the ancient Hebrews seemed eternally locked in the grim prison cells of their master's envy and hate. But at this darkest hour the message of deliverance flashed forth. The people clad themselves in traveling garments and nature sustained their effort. For darkness and death settled upon the wide domain of the cruel masters. But the light of promise still shone among the hovels and huts in the land of Goshen, and heaven's bright star blazed and

burned on the bosom of the vaulted dome and pointed the people away out of the land of bondage down to the Red Sea, and the waters observed their approach and the floods were driven back and an unarmed and all but helpless people marched over, while Pharaoh and his army were conquered in the swelling tide. We will keep our faith, and continue our struggle and endure the pain and affliction of the hour; for we know that He that is with us is greater than they who be against us.

APPENDIX E-5

DISINTEGRATING HUMAN RELATIONS

In the face of this great need for the practice of scientific and right human relations, we see evidence of the disintegration of human relations. Political conflicts, economic servitude and social corruption still curse the souls of nations great and small. Nations preach peace and prepare for war. They advocate freedom and then forge chains for the hands of the weak. In this enlightened age there are more political, economic and intellectual slaves on the face of the globe than ever before in any one single period of history. This modern slavery is not confined to the unlearned and primitive, but some of the most enlightened people of the earth are included in this plight.

THE NEED FOR NEW IDEAS

We need dynamic and creative ideas to help save mankind from this night of servitude. When ideas once creative and flaming grow cold and lose their power of persuasion, society becomes static and leaders begin to defend the old order and live in constant fear of defeat and seek to hold the loyalty of the people by force. Arnold Toynbee had this in mind when he said: "The piper who has lost his cunning, can no longer conjure the feet of the multitude into a dance, and in rage and panic he now attempts to convert himself into a drill-sergeant

or slave-driver, and to coerce by physical force the people that he can no longer lead by his old magnetic charm . . .”¹ “When leaders cease to lead their tenure of power becomes an abuse, the rank and file mutiny; the officers seek to restore order by drastic action. Orpheus who has lost his lyre or forgotten how to play it, now lays about him with Xerxes’ whip, and the result is a hideous pandemonium in which the military formation breaks down into anarchy.”²

In 1917, communism initiated one of the greatest revolutions in Russia. It had as its dominant idea the freedom of the common people of the world. But today, practical deeds both home and abroad have put a cloud over the once glorious concept of Russia’s holy brotherhood among common men. And the revolution has lost much of its power. For in its prosperity, Russian communism has sacrificed much of its old idealism and has turned to military might as a way of defense and conquest, and has developed within itself a new ruling class. An ex-Communist leader, Milovan Djilas, once vice-president of Yugoslavia, recently made the following statement:

“The heroic era of communism is past. The epoch of its great leaders has ended. The epoch of practical men has set in. The new class has been created. It is at the height of its power and wealth, but it is without new ideas. It has nothing more to tell the people. The only thing that remains is for it to justify itself.”³

With this state of affairs in communism, the piper has lost his cunning, and Orpheus no longer attracts by the sweet music

¹ *A Study of History*, Page 246.

² *Ibid.* Page 276.

³ *The New Class*, Page 53-54 by Milovan Djilas.

of a lofty promise of deliverance for the oppressed people of the world.

THE AMERICAN PREDICAMENT

As we face the cold facts of our own nation, I fear that much that was said about the present plight of Russia may be applied to our own nation. History seems to teach us that the heroic era of American democracy has passed, and that the epoch of practical men has set in, and the United States is now at the height of its power and wealth, but it is without new ideas in the field of democracy. We do have great leaders today, but the age of Jefferson and Adams, and that of Lincoln, have long since passed. Power, wealth and prosperity require the leadership of practical men who are preservers and protectors of the status quo. We are not offering any new ideas in democracy today. In fact, some of the old ideas advocated by the founding fathers are proving too advanced for many American citizens of this present generation. Neither the United States nor Russia is trying to win the people of the world today with revolutionary ideas and with a new idealism regarding increased freedom of man and the growth of democracy. We in America are seeking to win new allies and friends by the power of our wealth.

The Commerce Department reported June 3, 1958, that since World War II, America has spent 67 billion dollars in foreign aid and other related projects. Representative H. R. Gross from Iowa recently stated that today, the per capita cost of foreign aid is \$894.27 for every man, woman and child in this country. And what have we gained? I answer: the mistrust of many of our allies, the fear and hatred of many of the nations and peoples of the world. They spend American money and criticize the nation as a shylock, hiss our leaders from

stages of public speech, and stone and spit upon our diplomats in the streets of their cities. We should know by now as a nation, that we cannot win permanent allies by bartering the privileges of the sea lanes of the world. Neither will we bind the nations to us with cords of silver and chains of American gold. If we are to attract the peoples and nations of the world, the spirit of freedom must be real within our borders, and the ideas of democracy must dictate our practices and purposes, and the nation itself must be wholly united in its practice of freedom at home.

APPENDIX E-6

A MESSAGE TO THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE NATION

1. We appreciate all that our government is doing in the interest of world peace and for the welfare and growth of our nation as one of the great democracies of modern time.

2. Because we believe in the democratic way of life and place it above all other political and social values, we urge upon our government to make a serious re-appraisal of the American way of life, and if it is not found efficient, let us proclaim it so and seek a better way. But if it proves to be the way of freedom for all people, irrespective of class, then let the nation wholeheartedly and forthright remove every obstacle and every tradition that hinders its operation. The first line of American defense is the practice of democracy and the exercise of freedom. We urge our government to invest heavily in this front line of America's defense.

3. As a nation, we must not overlook the hostile attitude towards this country among many of the nations of the world. In order to improve our foreign relations and to gain more friends, we would suggest the following things:

- a. In addition to sending dollars, let our foreign aid to needy countries be primarily in the form of services, technical and scientific assistance so the people in question may develop their own resources and enter into wholesome trade agreement with us in the interest of the economy of their country. But foreign aid will be a failure if American citizens at home are forced

to stand in bread lines and look for jobs in vain; for real security begins at home, then spreads abroad.

Because a large percentage of the constituency of the National Baptist Convention live in rural communities, and many of them are directly connected with agriculture, we ask our government to lend its assistance to improving rural life among people who are not able to purchase large tracts of land. We have been reliably informed that a good bit of the available land is now being bought by large farmers and retired businessmen. There are many people in rural communities who desire the opportunity to own small tracts of land in order to raise their crops and to make sufficient profit to sustain themselves, to educate their children, and to provide something for old age and retirement.

We would suggest that our government would encourage co-operative farming wherever possible, and make it possible for small farmers to purchase the land and the modern equipment necessary for first class farming. In this respect our government would be using the land to help citizens become economically independent and also to help lift the level of culture in these United States of America. We believe that some of the overcrowding in our cities is due to the fact that life on the countryside is not conducive to the comfort, culture, and economical growth that many American citizens desire.

According to a report from the Second Session of the Eighty-Fifth Congress dealing with Public Law 337, there was brought out in the debate that many acres of land in the United States are dedicated to military training. It was stated, "The public land used for military training, gunnery, bombing ranges and missile testing, would make a road fifteen miles wide from San Francisco to New York." "Today defense land holdings amount to six tenths of an acre for each of the 47 million families in the United States. The holdings total

over 40 million square miles, more than the entire state of Ohio, and over five times the area of Massachusetts.”

While we do not criticize our government in its effort at defense and security, we do believe that a serious effort should be made to harness the land of our country to the production of better homes, better families and higher standards of living.

We do not believe in dole, but if the United States is interested in sending millions of dollars as foreign aid to nations abroad, we beg of our government to invest at least a fraction of that amount in home aid that will give deserving men and women a chance to own their share of the good earth, and to help produce the food and commodities essential to the economical and cultural growth of the nation. What we do at home, will determine in a large measure our success in international conflicts and contests.

World communism is the big rock that threatens the American way of life because its appeal is based on the theory of freedom for all. But the United States cannot match the big rock of communism in world affairs until it has enough justice and freedom available to handle in the name of democracy its Little Rock in the state of Arkansas. The admission of worthy students to school must be determined by educational standards within the system, and not by the temper and the howls of mobs and hoodlums on the outside. If any section of the United States is not ready to practice her theory of freedom, the sincerity of the whole nation is called in question, and our government must stand condemned and ashamed before the nations of the world.

- b. Our diplomats should be selected with greater care. They should be men who are not afflicted with sectionalism and who do not believe in the doctrine of white supremacy. They should be schooled in the history of the country and understand the language, the mind

and custom of the people to whom they are sent in order to know how to win and hold the friendship of these countries in the name of and for the sake of the nation.

4. That in order to overcome the present sectionalism and division of our nation, the Federal Government should take a greater responsibility in determining and protecting citizenship rights. And that the government should enforce uniform voting laws all over the nation, and schools of instruction should be set up by the Federal Government in the southland similar to those for teaching newcomers how to become qualified for naturalized citizenship. These schools in the south should teach all adults of voting age all of the requirements for voting, and once they have passed the test prescribed by the Federal Government, they then would be granted the right to vote without further question or intimidation. Before sectionalism shall be overcome in the south, one of two things must happen. The states of the south must accept the fundamental principles of the Federal Government regarding the right to vote for all citizens, or the Federal Government must determine the voting rights of all citizens and enforce the same.

In advertising the voting machines at the World's Fair in Brussels, Belgium, there is a statement by President Eisenhower written in English, French, and Flemish, which reads as follows: "The right to vote, to make a secret and independent political decision is the ultimate guarantee of liberty and freedom to people throughout the world." The president here, has told the world that without voting there can be no ultimate guarantee of liberty and freedom.

As we pointed out in our Denver address in 1956, voting is the essential right of all American citizens, and no people will ever acquire their rights until they are allowed to vote. I repeat here what I said then:

“Our most urgent request to the two major parties of this country, to the president of the United States, to every member of Congress, is to give to our brothers in the south the full right to vote. Take away intimidations, veiled threats and subterfuges. Take away the old phantom of yesteryears, and tie not our legal future to the grim ghost of the dead past, and bury not our sacred right in the sombre shadows of our grandfathers’ tombs. Give us our ballot now. We will no longer be satisfied with patronage for a few select Negroes, neither will we obey the deceptive advice of a few party stooges, be they black or white. We want the ballot for all our brothers in the southland. There is no substitute for the ballot. If we do not know how to vote then set up your schools of instructions and we will learn our lesson and learn it well. If we do not know how to mark our ballot, give it to us and let us scratch it until we learn how to mark it right. Give us the security agents and the officers of the law who will guard our sacred rights at every polling place. If you will give to us our ballot, we will not worry the Federal Government in the near future about our rights as citizens. If you give us the unrestricted ballot in the south, we will not beg Congress about the passage of an anti-lynching law; we will by the power of our vote write that law on the statute books of southern states, and drive the hooded hosts from their secret dens of vice, and stop cold the night prowlers of our streets. Give us the ballot in the south and we will purge our land of blood-thirsty mobs and put an end to their reckless deeds. Give us our ballot, and we will help to put in office sheriffs who will enforce the law and protect the community from violence. We will help to put on the benches of the south more judges who will ‘do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with

their God.' Give us the ballot now, and we will help to put in the state houses of the south governors who will uphold the law of the several states, defend with all their might the Federal Constitution without fear of reprisals and defeat. And we will send to the sacred halls of Congress from the fair southland, men who will seek not only the welfare of their local states, but the welfare and security of the nation. If you give us the ballot, we will quietly, peaceably, and without animosity or bloodshed, implement the Supreme Court's Decision of May 17, 1954, and we will show you that the lion of political power and the lamb of the ordinary and the humble, will lie down together, and one with the humility of a child shall lead them."

APPENDIX E-7

A BRIEF WORD TO THE NEGRO RACE

My friends, I know well the task that confronts us. We are a weak minority and do not have the power and the resources to win the struggle of freedom by physical force. Fifteen million helpless Americans cannot win the battle of freedom against the will and opposition of a hundred and fifty million. I know how painful the yoke we wear and how heavy the burden we bear. Long be the struggle and rough the road, and narrow the way, but we must be strong and face it all with courage. For your consideration and guidance I offer six suggestions:

1. In spite of what others may do, let us remain loyal to our country and support its laws with all of our being and work for a greater and more democratic America where freedom shall forever be free.

2. Let us use every method in harmony with the Federal Constitution to win our rights as first class citizens, and let us not stop until all chains are broken and all citizens are free.

3. Let us make it crystal clear that in our struggle for civil rights, we do not desire to escape from our people and our race. We love our race and thank God for the talents that He has given us. But we simply desire equal opportunities to use all of our gifts for the advancement of ourselves and of others.

4. Let us work to invest fully all of our acquired rights, and let us study and sacrifice to improve ourselves as a people and to grow in culture, and to become self-sufficient financially and otherwise.

5. Above all, let us not lose our souls in bitterness. If the struggle be longer than we had hoped, let us keep a spirit of goodwill and the faith to press forward, and the patience to wait when the opposition is too great for us to overcome. Let us take our disappointments and reverses without despair. When our trusted friends in high places fail us, let us not turn to hate.

We must remember that this world does not belong to any one race or nation, and that the doctrine of white supremacy has not as yet been approved by science or justified by the courts of heaven, and that the word of an unjust judge is not the final answer to those who cry for liberty and long for the gifts of freedom. I know how tired you must be of oppression, and how hard it is to endure the events of the times. But I urge you to be courageous, strong and patient; for the battle is not given to the swift, nor the victory to the strong, but those that hold out and endure to the end. Remember, evil governors do not last forever, and prejudiced jurors must some day march out of the jury box never to return, and even dictators are born to die. I ask you, where are the Pharaohs who tried to hold in chains the people of God? Ask the floods, and they will tell you, inquire from the swelling tides of red seas and they will proclaim their doom. Go stand at the arch of triumph of ancient Rome and ask where are the once proud conquering Caesars at whose merciless tread the earth shook with horror. Inquire at Waterloo and at the lonely Isle of St. Helena about the destiny of the bloodthirsty Napoleon, and ask modern history where are the godless Hitlers and the wreckers of human happiness and the spoilers of the souls of men? Did it occur to you that amidst all of the flux of chance runs an eternal purpose? And in the dark night of oppression there is a bright star that never sets and an everlasting sun of hope that has never gone down. And in the presence of change and

decay, there is ONE who changes not. He will abide with us. There is a God who rules the heavens, and if we are right He will fight our battles. In the language of Robert Browning, "Our times are in His hand . . . Trust God, see all nor be afraid."

6. The sixth and final suggestion is that we as a people try that old idea that was given to the world twenty centuries ago by Jesus of Nazareth. It is old, but yet it is new. It is new because it has never been tried. It is a past reality but also remains a future possibility. With this idea Jesus changed the course of history, shook down kingdoms, dethroned kings, and stopped the march of armies. This idea includes the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men. This idea was good enough to awaken the slumbering conscience of a chaotic world and to give to the little country of Palestine a new hope of life and survival, and it is universal enough to include all men. It was good enough to shake to its very foundation the static religion among the ancient Jews, and to revitalize the minds and souls of men in the pagan world. It was good enough for Rome and Athens, and it is good enough for the twentieth century. It is good enough for Soviet Russia. It will guide to victory the struggles of the United Nations. It is good enough for communist China. It is good enough for the once broken but rising Japan. It is good enough for the sons of Africa. It is good enough for us who struggle here in America. Jesus called it the Kingdom of God, the Beloved Community; for through it souls are cleansed, the minds of men are guided right, hearts are purified, and a bond of fellowship is given to all mankind. For those who are weary and heavy-laden, seeking security, fellowship and peace, Jesus said; "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

APPENDIX E-8

THE TWO-FOLD TASK OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO

I. We must continue to struggle for full first class citizenship in this great nation of ours. We must struggle according to the laws and principles of our democracy. We must ever believe in the eternal promises of our Constitution and the abiding assurances of the Bill of Rights. We must refrain from hate-bitterness and ill will, always abiding by the accepted laws of the land and working through legal channels for the correction of the failures and the mistakes that we confront. We must insist on universal suffrage, the rights of all citizens to the ballot box, and take our full responsibility in helping to elect those officials on whom the country must depend for leadership and guidance.

Through organized labor we must insist on our full share of the economic goods of life and join with the great host of other laborers in our battle against injustice and any form of exploitation, knowing full well that every laborer is worthy of his hire.

We must continue to knock at the door of every institution of learning until the bars are removed and the portals of opportunity are opened to all men according to their intellectual ability and moral fitness. But in this struggle the American Negro must know he is not working for himself alone, or for the rights of his own people exclusive of the rights of other American citizens. In this he works for the rights of all American citizens and labors to help the United States of

America become a democracy not only in theory but in practice and in truth. I would be one of the first to oppose the American Negro's struggle in the field of civil rights if such a struggle jeopardized the civil rights of other American citizens, or if such a struggle were in opposition to the laws of the land and contrary to the philosophy of freedom and the moral laws of the universe. I approve the great struggle for first class citizenship for all Americans, for it is the only way by which and through which America as a nation can become a first class and world-respected democracy. Let no clever demagogue deceive us by his propaganda phrases or by semantics and shibboleths born of prejudgments and unfounded prejudices. The struggle for first class citizenship is not a struggle for so-called race mixing. The mixing, or better still, the fellowship among peoples of different groups and races must remain a matter of personal choice and group preference. In a democracy like ours the law never dictates who shall be your companion, your friend, your associate and your house guest. The struggle for first class citizenship does not involve the right to worship in a church that has a tradition of racial segregation or discrimination. Under the laws of our land churches may, if they will or wish, draw the line as to who shall be members and who shall not be. No American Negro, therefore, has the right under the laws of our land to seek to force himself upon a congregation of white Christians who do not invite or welcome his membership among them. He who seeks church membership for racial reasons is just as un-Christian as those who deny him membership for racial reasons. No individual should seek membership in any church unless he believes in so doing his life will be made richer by the fellowship, and he will be accepted to carry his full share of kingdom responsibility. It is both un-Christian and unfair to seek to force ourselves upon others and to enjoy the fruits

of their sacrifices and labor without a willingness to pay the price. A person who has resolved to take out a weekly twenty-five cent share in the Kingdom of God has no business desiring to join a million dollar church and to walk on plush carpets and sit in cushioned pews and to gaze at stained glass windows and to listen to a minister whose salary is thirty thousand dollars a year. If he is not willing to invest more than twenty-five cents in kingdom causes he ought to be satisfied to sit on twenty-five cent pews, and to walk on twenty-five cent carpets, and to listen to a preacher who has learned how to live on a twenty-five cent salary.

I repeat that the struggle for civil rights does not mean race-mixing or getting that to which we are not entitled. It simply means enjoying those opportunities guaranteed by and under the laws of the land and to every American citizen. Democracy in education, economics, politics and every other phase of American life is one thing, and mere racial mixing is another. For people may live on the same street in the same block, travel on the same train and buy their tickets at the same railroad station, go to the same school and enjoy all of the opportunities that America offers, and still remain within the family and social framework of their own race.

The truth is under our form of government it is no legal offense to practice racial prejudice. There is no law on the statute books of the United States of America that can prohibit one man from thinking he is better than another, and from feeling that he has the right to discriminate against other races and peoples so long as said practice is restricted to the field of private associations, clubs and fraternities. Racial prejudice, of course, is a sin against the souls of those who practice it. It renders a man blind who has eyes to see, and reduces the mentality of a genius, at this point, to the level of ordinary men. But it is not legally wrong until such a person

attempts to have his prejudice condoned by law and supported by the government itself. It is both morally and legally wrong for men to believe in segregation and discrimination to seek to twist the laws of the land to serve their prejudicial purposes and to support what some call "the southern way of life." As American Negroes who love their government, honor their flag, and are true patriots of their country, we must always work for those principles and ideals that will guarantee first class citizenship to all peoples. But this is not the final task of American Negroes. This is not the only cause unto which we were born, and for which we must struggle, sacrifice, and if need be, give our lives.

II. The second great task of the American Negro is to make a full and creative use of the freedom already acquired. There is a great danger that we may lose our souls in the comfortable shadows of accepted alibis. We may tend to excuse ourselves in the name of the external conditions that have been forced upon us and deceive ourselves into thinking that others are wholly to blame for our predicament and are guilty for all the sins that we commit. Some have tended to go to the extreme of accepting the doctrine of inferiority and have resolved that they cannot become greater because the odds are against them. There are some Negroes who really believe that what is white is right and what is black is bad. I pity the Negro who has so lost his self-respect and the regard for his own race so that he thinks it is dangerous or insecure to cast his lot with his own people. We must not procrastinate, we must not postpone the day of great decision, and we cannot wait until other men are freed of prejudice before we launch a serious campaign for greater racial achievements, greater racial discoveries, and greater personal developments in moral and spiritual character. Let us use the freedom that we have to build for ourselves greater values and more wholesome communities. There

is a possibility of losing by default little islands of freedom that we have already gained in a bi-racial culture.

As a people we have not exhausted all of our resources in developing Christian homes and families. Too many delinquent adults are leading to delinquent children and too much crime has been developed in our respective communities. We must harness all of our resources to reduce the criminal elements in our communities and to help more of our young people find and follow the highway of constructive and creative living. This is a task of the home, school and the church.

As Baptists and followers of Jesus Christ, we believe in the separation of church and state. We can build our own churches and institutions according to our own desire and tastes. There is no law against our sacrifices. Our government does not hinder us in the purchase of land and in the construction of houses of worship. Unlike churches in some other countries, we are free to teach religion in our homes, on the streets and in great city auditoriums. We are free to choose the leaders whom we desire to make the rules by which our churches are to be governed. The battle for this freedom was fought by men like Roger Williams who paid the price in privation and in wandering in the lonely snow-infested wilderness of Rhode Island. He believed in soul liberty and lived and fought for the ideal of the separation of church and state. Look about you; visit the court houses of the land and you will be humiliated and embarrassed by the sad spectacle of Negro Baptist churches taking their freedom, their religious freedom, and passing it back into the hands of the judges and jurors of courts, which is a tacit admission that some of us believe we are not qualified to govern ourselves and to use our own freedom that we have already won. If the Negro church in the United States of America cannot govern itself in peace and in

fellowship without the interference of the courts of the land, then we must accept the tragic fact that every victory won by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and every decree of the courts in granting to us our freedom shall be rendered fruitless and vain. We must as a people use our acquired freedom to build for ourselves a more wholesome fellowship. We must believe in ourselves and have faith in ourselves, make laws to govern ourselves, and then abide by the same. We must harness our talents, employ our several abilities and summon our genius to win for, and among ourselves, more efficient character and more constructive community life. We need more trained preachers in our Baptist churches, and we need them now. We urge upon our ministers to take every advantage of schools, colleges and seminaries. If you cannot study by day then find time to study at night. More of our leisure time can well be used in the reading of books, the study of God's word, and meditating and thinking on truth. There is no barrier to high thinking and humble living.

I do not make this statement to discourage those who have not had the opportunity for formal college training. I do not discredit the great work that you are doing and that you can and will do. I simply desire to emphasize the importance of using all of our possible resources. I do not mean at all to use study as a source of pride, and formal training as a substitute for a deeper religious experience. We study in order to stir up the gift that is within us, to increase our efficiency, but never to destroy our originality. I urge upon ministers to be themselves and to be natural. Do not try to imitate the style of other preachers, but use what God has given you. Improve your talents and develop as much as possible your gifts, but don't surrender them upon the advice of instructors or critics.

Don't forget that one of the freest pulpits in the United States of America is the pulpit in the Negro church. We do not need to seek that freedom. We have it already. We are free to preach the whole truth of God. We are free to give to America a prophetic message without compromise and without restriction. We live close enough to the locust and wild honey diet of John the Baptist to escape the tender servitude of wealth and rank. American needs a prophetic message and we must not fail our nation and our generation.

A few days ago I spoke in a certain southern city, and a young white reporter came to the Negro community to talk with me. In the course of the conversation he said: "You Negro preachers seem to be so outspoken on the issues affecting the social, economic, political and religious life of the nation. Negro preachers are the leaders today in many of the progressive movements of the nation. They work for civil rights, for justice, for democracy, and advocate the application of the religious message to our national problems.

Said he, "My pastor never expresses himself on the current issues affecting the struggle for democracy in this country, and does not seem to apply his gospel to the problems of the state and the nation. The truth is for the most part, the white preacher of the south does not seem to have anything much to say on any of these liberal matters before the public today. I think the church," said he, "should take the lead in all of these progressive matters such as civil rights, democracy and education, and the problem of freedom and the dignity of man." Then he asked, "Why do you think our white preachers are so silent on these things?"

I said to him, "I don't know, and I do not propose to sit in judgment on other religious leaders and preachers, but it might be, you people have so restricted your preacher that

he does not have the freedom that he needs to preach a whole gospel in a bi-racial and segregated society. It may be if the congregations will give to your preachers more freedom they will become more active in proclaiming the whole counsel of God to men and women everywhere.”

The Negro minister has already a free pulpit. Let him not desecrate it or neglect it, but let him use it to the glory of God. If we do not possess the best language and the best training, let us use what we have to the glory of God. If I were ever brought to the crisis of choice I would much rather prefer a preacher rich in language and poor in soul. As we struggle to improve ourselves let us not underestimate and disregard the values that we have.

Integration must not mean the disintegration of all the values peculiar to the Negro race. It must not mean the glorification of all that is white and the disrespect of all that is colored. Integration must mean simply the extending to all American citizens all the opportunities guaranteed and promised by the Federal Constitution. Integration is a necessity for the United States of America and a glorious end for a true democracy to achieve. But for the minority groups involved, integration is an opportunity and only an opportunity in which said groups may grow to the full stature of manhood and womanhood. It is not an end of life that can summon all of the highest powers of our being. For when it is accomplished it will mark the growth of those who have learned to grant these rights. It will not of necessity mean the growth of those who are given these rights unless they in turn will harness them to the weal of man and the glory of God.

If there are those among us who love not their race and who desire to leave their race and join with other groups, we say God speed you on your way. We will not forget you, but will

keep open the doors of welcome for your early return.

There must be a racial togetherness based not on our quest for rights, but based on our interest and in our commitment to a task of creating and producing personal, individual and social values that can bless our race, our nation and mankind.

I will always believe in the potential of my race until they are robbed of brain power, and their souls are buried in some tomb of despair never to rise again. God has equipped us from within, and nature has provided us with the weapons with which to fight constructive battles of moral and spiritual growth. These things are in our hands; we must use them now.

Moses among the ancient Hebrews had a stick but took that stick and used it to the glory of God, and when he stretched it out the forces of nature responded and through it Pharaoh was defeated and victory came to the children of Israel. God has equipped us, let us use the equipment now. If our Creator had not equipped us from within, if He had demanded thought without giving us minds, and if He had required of us vision without giving us eyes to see, I would join with others in raising my protest against Him and would shout defiance at a universe that would make us thus. And I would lament the birth of the race like a troubled Job who cursed the day of his birth, and would ask that our beginnings be expunged from the records of history and the day of birth be torn from the calendar of time. But God has given us physical, mental, moral and spiritual equipment, and has set in us an inner light that the very shadows of hell cannot dim and the most cruel winds of adversity cannot blow out; and He has demanded of us to move in the right direction and has given us the instinct and the inspiration to sail life's seas in all kinds of weather, fair or foul. The way we take depends not upon the surge of the sea or the pull of the tide or the blast of the winds. It depends upon the inner state of mind and the set of the soul.

*"One ship drives East and another West.
With the self-same winds that blow.
'Tis the set of the sails and not the gales,
Which tells us the way to go."*

I summon you to courageous action now, and urge you to rise above the limitations of circumstances.

We must not wait until all of the doors of freedom are opened wide before we begin to practice self-control in its fullness. We must not wait until enemies cease and opposition is removed before we commit ourselves to the creative and constructive values of a higher life.

What of John Bunyan in the Bedford jail? Did he elect to live in bitterness with his mind in fetters and his soul chained by the laws and rules of the Bedford jail? He did not. While his body was in prison his mind exercised the freedom of investigation and speculation, and through his vision gave to the world the *Pilgrim's Progress*, one of the greatest allegories ever to come from the shadows of a prison cell. So now we know that "bolts and bars do not a prison make."

Socrates did not wait until all men accepted him as a thinker and as a friend of youth and as a pioneer of democracy. He taught the truth and wedded himself to the ideals of freedom. He would not be contained by the bars of a prison and did not surrender before those who hated him. He discovered and lived for values that survived beyond the power of poisonous hemlock.

John on the isle of Patmos as a prisoner for the word of God and the testimony of truth, had been removed from fellowship with the saints. Doubtless he longed to return to the brotherhood and desired to hear again their expressions of friendship and their words of encouragement. But this was not his lot. The imperial powers had excommunicated him and he

had been driven into exile by those in authority. But John did not allow Patmos to be his prison or his solitude to become a dungeon, and did not postpone the moment of vision until the day of his full emancipation. But while he was on the island; the island of servitude, the island of discrimination and segregation, the island of affliction and suffering, the island of loneliness and dejection, he found himself also in the spirit on the Lord's Day, and through this he moved forward with creative genius and plucked from the cruel jaws of night new and blazing stars of inspiration and flung them like radiant gems against the cloud-filled night of human privation and affliction and gave to the world a new story of the power, majesty and conquering genius of the Christ who was once dead but now alive forever more.

There are values that are too big to be hemmed in by human effort, or to be pressed down by the curse of slavery. There is a hope too glorious to be dimmed in the night of despair. There is a peace that can gladden the mind while the taunts of enemies rage high and wide.

There is a music of the soul in a decadent society. There is a fertility of spirit where the land is desert. There is a beckoning vision that points to the sun-lit hills of a more lofty future though the nights be long and the days be dark and dreary. There is a faith that tells us we are not alone in the struggle of righteousness. The universe is on the side of truth and the whole cosmic order basically works for the ultimate victory of the will and purpose of God. This faith is a legacy from our fathers. Silver and gold they gave not unto us. Rank and stations of honor they could not bequeath; but they gave to us a faith, a confidence in life at its best, a spiritual substance of the things we hope for and the evidence of things unseen. This faith is the vital ligament that binds the imperfect life of man to the perfect life of God. It is the golden chain that

links the poverty of earth to the bounties of heaven, and the sordid and sorrowing life of man to the eternal promises of God. Many things have perished, but not this vital faith. Scholarship has removed much of the dross of tradition from the sparkling gems of truth. Science has pushed back the curtains of superstition and put to death many old conceptions of man and the universe, but the faith of the fathers still lives. New theological systems have come to challenge and to displace the old. Philosophers have given to mankind new notions of religion and aided greatly in the discovery of many new ideas of God. But no force has as yet destroyed the vitality of our fathers' faith. This vital faith has been in the dungeons of hate. It has been tested by the fires of affliction and put to the cruel sword of persecution, but it is still alive. Our fathers themselves knew the deep dark shadows of prison cells. They were held by chains, their backs were lashed with cruel whips, but their hearts and spirits remained free. Hence we still sing of our fathers' faith:

*“Faith of our fathers! living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword:
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word
Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free:
How sweet would be their children's fate,
If they like them, could die for thee!
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!”*

APPENDIX F

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PUBLISHING BOARD'S LIBRARY

By

D. C. WASHINGTON, D.D., L.L.D.

*Executive Director
Sunday School Publishing Board*

In Chapter Seven of this book you read about the recent work we have done at the Sunday School Publishing Board to make our library a more usable and valuable tool for use by our own editors, by students and scholars, and by the general public.

On November 27, 1959, the library was formally opened. Mrs. Hazel Thompson is Resident Librarian and Mrs. Lois N. Clark, Assistant Librarian at Knoxville College, is our Library Consultant.

For more than a year prior to the official opening, Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Clark worked to organize and catalog the valuable collection of books and materials that had been accumulated under Dr. Townsend's direction.

When the work was done we were all pleased and impressed with the unusually high quality of the library. None of us had really known how fine a collection we had.

This library's primary purpose is to serve our editors in their work of producing the many excellent materials that we

are privileged to publish here at the Sunday School Publishing Board.

However, we find that we have in this library the nucleus of a most valuable historical collection concerning our denomination. Over the years, therefore, we would like to see the library expand and become the central repository of materials relating to Negro Baptist history. This would make it possible for us to know our own history better, since study and research into our past could be accomplished that is now difficult or impossible to perform.

The first thing I want to do, therefore, is to announce to all members of our faith our intention of devoting time and effort to the task of building this historical library. We want you to know of its existence, and we invite you to use it at any time. Our librarian is ready to help you at all times.

Secondly, I would like to issue an appeal to all ministers, laymen, and members of our faith regarding old books or other historical documents relating to Negro Baptists, that they may have in their possession. If you are willing that such materials become the common property of the entire Convention, we would like to talk to you about incorporating them into the Sunday School Publishing Board Library.

Here are some of the types of materials that we would welcome for the collection:

(1) Books, pamphlets and leaflets written by or about Negro Baptists, published prior to 1900.

(2) Regional and local histories of Negro Baptist Churches.

(3) Historical records of individual churches that are affiliated with the Convention.

(4) Manuscripts such as diaries, letters, notes on meetings, etc., by Negro Baptist ministers, particularly any such material written prior to 1900.

(5) Printed materials or handwritten documents of any

kind relating to the early post-Civil War history of the rise of our Baptist colleges, academies, and universities. Such materials might even include early notes of lectures kept by students.

(6) Early sermons by Negro Baptist ministers, and accounts by laymen of their experiences in churches, camp meetings, etc.

(7) Early collections of Negro religious music and spirituals—and any old or unpublished songs that you may know yourself.

The history of our race and our denomination has been such that such early materials tend to be rare, and therefore the writing of our history is often difficult. Persons or churches having such materials can make a precious contribution to our common heritage by making them available to the Convention through our Library.

While we are on the subject of our denomination's history, I would like to suggest to some young scholar in our Baptist colleges a topic for a doctoral dissertation that would be a great service to both the Negro Baptist faith and American history as a whole. The topic arose time and time again during the months of September-October 1959, when one of the authors of this book was engaged in research here at the Publishing Board.

During the Reconstruction days, the Church offered, for many Negro Baptists, the only channel in which they could exercise their own full potential abilities, and the only channel in which they could learn the arts of self-government and organizational cooperation. The church was, therefore, a true preparation for broader participation in the whole of American life.

A good dissertation exploring in detail just how this took place, and evaluating both the impact and direction of this

training as it affected the participation of Negro Baptists in American life, would fill a great void in the literature of our denomination and in the literature of American history.

As a final note, I would like to call to the attention of our Churches and members one of the more unusual possessions that we now have in the library.

The early leaders of the Convention included Prof. W. G. Hynes of Nashville, who was also one of America's pioneer movie makers. He has described his unusual life and experiences in the booklet *Negro Looking Up*, the Tenth Edition of which was published by the Sunday School Publishing Board in 1937, and a few copies of which are still available for 50 cents, postpaid, through the Board's bookstore, at the time of this writing.

Prof. Hynes regularly attended the early sessions of the National Baptist Convention, and he began making movies of the sessions, beginning with session in Chicago in 1905.

Few religious denominations anywhere in the world are so fortunate as to have such early records on motion picture film of their activities and proceedings.

Many of Prof. Hynes fascinating and precious motion picture reels are now in the Sunday School Publishing Board Library. Church groups and Baptist colleges and universities that may wish to have information on these films are welcome to contact our librarian.

APPENDIX G

LIST OF READING SUGGESTIONS WITH COMMENTS AND ANNOTATIONS

There is no fully satisfactory history of the Baptist faith. Thomas Armitage's *History of the Baptists, Traced by Their Vital Principles and Practices, From the Time of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to the Year 1886* (New York: Bryan, Taylor & Company, 1887, 978 pp.) gives a general view of the rise and development of the faith, but is not very readable by modern standards, and is in addition both outdated and very difficult to obtain.

Henry C. Vedder's *Short History of the Baptists* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907, Reprinted 1945) is the standard current work, and was in print at the time of publication of the present work. Its exposition of the growth of the faith in Europe, and of the revival periods in America, are both good. But the author is strongly interested in refuting the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Faith, which often gives his work the character of a partisan tract rather than an historical account. In addition, it gives almost no notice to the rise and progress of the faith among American Negroes, and by this time is also outdated in its failure to describe events of the present century.

A good, up-to-date, readable general history of the faith is greatly needed. Until then, Vedder's book will remain the best available.

The best account of the tenets of the faith, in the authors' opinion, is *The Baptist Faith* by E. Y. Mullins and H. W.

Tribble (Nashville: Convention Press, 1935, 126 pp.). This little volume is truly outstanding, and merits a place on the bookshelf of every serious member of the faith. It is available from the Sunday School Publishing Board.

On the early history of the faith, there is a beautifully written chapter on Hans Denck in *Spiritual Reformers in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, by the Quaker Rufus Jones (London: Macmillan 1914, paperback reprint issued in the United States by Beacon Press, 1959). A more detailed treatment of his life and writings will be found in the rather scarce volume *Hans Denck 1495-1527, Heretic and Humanist* (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1927).

The general history of the rise and fall of Anabaptism, and subsequent rise of the Baptist faith, will be found in many books on the religious history of the Reformation.

There are a number of biographies of Roger Williams; the best, in the authors' opinion, is *Roger Williams* by Perry Miller (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1953).

Three books are indispensable to the serious student of the Baptist faith among American Negroes.

The first is *The History of the Negro Church* by Carter G. Woodson (Washington: The Associated Press, 1921, Reprinted 1945). Woodson is a Negro historian of high qualification. The book describes the participation of Negroes in the full range of American faiths and denominations, and gives prominent attention to Negro Baptists.

The second is the book cited a number of times in the present text — *Negro Baptist History* by Lewis G. Jordan (Nashville: Sunday School Publishing Board, 1930). This book is not well organized but is an invaluable source of original documents. It is out of print and very scarce.

The third is *Epoch of Negro Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board* by E. A. Freeman (Kansas City: Central Seminary

Press, 1953). Mr. Freeman is pastor of the First Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kansas. This book is the outgrowth of his doctoral thesis at Central Baptist Seminary. In addition to providing a detailed discussion of the growth of the Foreign Mission Board, the book provides a valuable service by reproducing and expanding some sections of Rev. Lewis G. Jordan's book on the early history and founding of the Convention. The book is in print, and is available from the Sunday School Publishing Board.

Generally speaking, contemporary books and records on Negro Baptist history prior to 1900 are few and scarce. Regional histories were written in a few instances. There is, for example, a volume entitled *The History of Negro Baptists in Mississippi*, by a young minister named Patrick H. Thompson (Jackson, Miss.: R. W. Bailey Printing Company, 1898, 669 pp.). It is certainly one of the earliest books written by a Negro Baptist minister, and has the status of an extreme rarity. The Library of Congress does not have a copy. The Sunday School Publishing Board's library does have one, and this is the only existing copy known to the authors of the present work. It was printed on extremely poor and brittle paper, which now crumbles to the touch.

This work was consulted by Rev. Freeman in the preparation of *Epoch of Negro Baptists*. Along with similar scarce materials in the Sunday School Publishing Board's library, it will provide rich source material for future students and historians (See Appendix F).

The work of Northern Baptists in promoting Negro education in the South after the Civil War is well told in a series of fascinating personality sketches in *Baptist Missionary Pioneers Among Negroes: Sketches Written by Mary C. Reynolds and others* (place and date of publication omitted). It is

in print, and available from the Sunday School Publishing Board.

A good brief description of the work of the Foreign Mission Board is contained in *Negro Baptists and Foreign Missions* by C. C. Adams and Marshall A. Talley (Philadelphia: Foreign Mission Board, Revised Edition, 94 pp., 1952). Most readers would be grateful if the authors would bring out a new revision updating the material, since the basic information is clearly and interestingly presented. The book is available from the Foreign Mission Board.

The Foreign Mission Board also publishes a very attractive brochure entitled *The Revised Pictorial Review of Mission Stations of the Foreign Mission Board* (Philadelphia: Foreign Mission Board, no date, 77 pp.). These pictures show the Convention's missionaries and mission stations throughout the world.

The work of Nannie H. Borroughs and the growth of the National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls is found in a brochure issued by the School, *A Dream in 1907 Comes True in 1956*, available from the school at Lincoln Heights, Washington, D. C.

The Sunday School Publishing Board brought out an attractive brochure in 1960 entitled *The Inside Story of the Sunday School Publishing Board*. It contains many pictures showing the personnel and daily activities of the Board, and sets forth its current program.

Note: The names of individual churches appear in the index under the state in which they are located. The reader will note that relatively few churches are discussed or referred to in the text. This is in keeping with the authors' purpose of presenting the story of the entire denomination rather than the detailed history of individual churches; for that reason, only those churches having a direct link to the history of the rise of Negro Baptists are cited.

The authors wish to thank Miss Sharon Rottier of New York City for compiling the index.

INDEX

- Adams, Rev. Dr. C. C., 150, 154, 155,
156-157, 182-183
- Adult Bible Quarterly*, 122
- Advanced Bible Stories for Older
People and Young Adults*, 122
- African Mission Convention, 84, 91
- Alabama
 - Star Baptist Church, Stevenson, 93
- Alabama State Baptist Convention, 67
- Alabama State Teachers College, 120
- American Baptist Convention, 67
- American Baptist Home Mission
Society, 132, 133, 134-35, 156
- American Baptist Missionary
Convention, 69-70, 84
- American Baptist Publication Society,
93, 98
- American Baptist Theological
Seminary, 146, 169, 184, 186
- American Baptist Triennial
Convention, 53, 55
- American Colonization Society, 55, 151
- American National Baptist
Convention, 91, 106, 142
- Amherst College, 132
- Anabaptists, 13, 14, 15, 18
- Anglicanism, 17, 24-25
- Aristotle, 22
- Arkansas
 - First Baptist Church, Helena, 95
 - Roanoke Baptist Church, Hot
Springs, 171
- Arkansas Baptist College, 95, 141
- Arkansas State Baptist Convention,
94, 141
- Arkansas Times*, 95
- "Atlanta Exposition Address," 80-82
- baptism, 10, 13, 14, 20
- Baptist Adult Union, 166
- Baptist Layman, The*, 121, 166
- Baptist Magazine*, 51
- Baptist Memorial*, 49
- Baptist National Educational
Convention, 91
- Baptist Teacher, The*, 121, 122
- Baptist Training Union, 105, 131,
165-166
- Baptist Voice*, 118
- Baptist Women's Missionary League,
105, 142
- Baptist World Alliance, 106, 174
- Baptist Young People's Union, 105, 165
- Baptists, African, 32
- Baptists, American
 - beginnings in America, 24-26, 27;
first American Baptist church, 18-
19, 26; founder (Roger Williams),
16-19, 26

- Baptists, American Negro
beginnings in America, 26-33; early
Associations, 53, 54, 68-69, 83-87,
88-93, 139; first Negro Baptist
Church, 28-33; foreign mission-
aries, 37-41, 50-51, 53-57, 69 (See
also Foreign Mission Convention
and Foreign Mission Board). For
other entries, see National Baptist
Convention and individual
subjects.
- Baptists, English, 16, 19, 25
Baptists, Jamaican, 38-41
Baptists, Liberian, 53
Bath House Commission, 170
Bendoo Mission, 154
Benedict College, 169
Bishop, Josiah, 46-47, 50
Bishop College, 169
Boyd, Rev. R. H., 102-104, 108
Bradbury, John W., 175-178, 184-186
Bradley, J. R., 122-123
Brooks Baptist Student Center, 166
Brown, Rev. C. S., 137
Bryan, Andrew, 38, 41-45
Bryan, Hannah, 38
Bryan, Jonathan, 42, 43, 44
Bryan, Sampson, 42, 43, 44
Bucknell University, 92
Bullock, Governor, 79
Burroughs, Nannie H., 106, 141-146
- Cambridge University, 16-17
Campbell, Lucie, 118
Caravaners, 166
Carey, Rev. Lott, 53-57, 69, 71, 149, 151
*Catechism of Scripture, Doctrine, and
Practice Designed for the Original
Instruction of Colored People*, 66
Catholicism, 12, 13, 25
church and state, 14-15, 17, 18, 19, 20,
26, 171, 175, 180-182
Civil War, 59-71, 80, 133
Clark, Mrs. L. N., 124
Colby College, 133
Coleman College, 138
Coles, Rev. and Mrs. J. J., 153-154
Colley, Rev. W. W., 85-86, 87, 140, 151,
152, 154
Colored Baptist Convention of
Virginia, 85
Colored Baptist Missionary State
Convention, 139
Columbia University, 80, 121
Consolidated American Baptist
Missionary Convention, 84
Cook, Stephen A., 38-39, 40
Cotton Kingdom, 66
Coxe, General, 65-66
Crane, Dean William, 154, 155-56
Cunningham, Rev. Henry, 52
- Davis, Edward, 42
Denck, Hans, 10-12, 13-16, 19, 190
Donald, David, 80
Dupree, Rev. H., 173
Dyer, Miss Carrie V., 156
East, Rev. J. E., 155
Ecumenical Institute, 121
Ecumenical Missionary
Conference, 106
Eisenhower, Dwight D., 172
Explorers, 166
- Fisk University, 114-115
Fleetwood, Bishop Samuel, 24-25
For Little Folk at Church, 121
Foreign Mission Board, 41, 70, 72, 84,
95, 99-101, 142, 148, 153, 156-157,
159-161
Foreign Mission Convention, 83, 85-86,
91, 92, 94, 95, 99, 140, 149, 151, 153,
154
Foreign Mission Society of Richmond,
53
Francis, Henry, 44
free will, 13, 14-15, 17, 83
Freedman's Aid Society of New
England, 135
Fugitive Slave Act, 69
- Gaddis, Jack, 74
Galphin, John, 29, 30, 31, 33
Garrison, William Lloyd, 152
George, Rev. David, 29-32, 34, 35, 36, 41

- Georgia
 First African Church, Savannah, 44
 First Baptist Church, Atlanta, 82
 First Baptist Church, Savannah
 (First Bryant Baptist Church),
 36, 41
 Second African Church, Savannah,
 44
 Springfield Baptist Church,
 Augusta, 46
Gospel Pearls, 117
 Greece, ancient, 21-22
 Griffin, Peter, 77
 Griffith, Dr. B., 93
- Hamilton, Col. Leroy, 44
 Harmond, Rev. R. E., 173-174
 Harris, S. P., 112
 Hartshorne Memorial College, 138, 156
 Hays, Brooks, 176
 Haynes, Rev. William, 112
 Home Mission Board, 93, 102-103, 105,
 131, 165, 166
 Howard University, 88, 166
- Iliad*, 34
 Ingolstadt, University of, 13
Inside Story, The, 120, 126
- Jackson, Rev. J. H., 155, 160-164,
 167-170, 172, 173, 176, 187-189
 Jackson College, 138
- Jamaica
 First Baptist Church, Kingston, 38
 First Baptist Church, Spanish
 Town, 39
- Japanese Interracial Christian
 University, 159
- Jones, Dr. C. C., 66
- Jordan, Lewis C., 72-79, 95-96, 98-101,
 106, 108, 119, 128, 132, 153, 155
- Jordan Memorial Baptist Training
 School, 158
- Junior Laymen's Group, 166
- Kentucky
 First Baptist Church, Lexington, 46
- Kirkland, Colonel, 36-37-38
- Laymen's League, 165, 166
- Leland College, 169
- Liberia
 First Baptist Church, Monrovia, 56
- Lincoln, Abraham, 70
- Lincoln Normal University, 140
- Lisle, Rev. George, 29, 31, 33, 35-41,
 42, 52, 80
- Lott Carey Convention, 53, 100
- Louisiana
 Bayou Chicot Baptist Church, 47
 Louisiana Baptist Association, 47
- Luther, Martin, 12-13, 15
- Lutheranism, 11, 12, 13, 15
- Madison University, 88
- Malekebu, Dr. D. S., 168
- Maryland
 First Negro Baptist Church,
 Baltimore, 65
- Marshall, Rev. Abraham, 43
- Masonic Home for the Aged,
 Nashville, 111
- Masons, 111
- Massachusetts
 Joy Street Baptist Church,
 Boston, 48, 49
- Massachusetts Bay Colony Charter, 18
- Massachusetts General Court, 19
- McAlpine, Robert, 138-139
- McAlpine, Rev. W. M., 138-140
- McKinney, Rev. H., 153
- McNeil, Dr. Jesse Jai, 121
- Meharry Medical College, 110, 111, 158
- Message to Parents*, 122
- Middle Ages, 22
- Mission Herald*, 96, 160
- Missions, Foreign
 See Baptists, American Negro,
 Foreign Missionaries; Foreign
 Mission Board; Foreign Mission
 Convention
- Missions, Home
 See Home Missions Board
- Mississippi
 Yazoo City Baptist Church, 78
- Moore, Rev. Matthew, 36

- Monson Academy, 132
 Moravians, 25
 Morehouse College, 138, 148, 169
 Morris, Rev. E. C., 94-95, 102-104, 108, 141
 Morris College, 169

 Nat Turner's Insurrection, 62-63, 151
 Natchez College, 169
 National Baptist Convention, Inc., 41, 57, 68, 70, 71, 72, 73, 78, 79, 82-85, 92-94, 95-109, 110, 112, 131, 140, 141, 142, 146, 147, 148, 160, 161, 165-179, 180-190. Charter, 193-198. Constitution, 199-208; President's addresses (excerpts), 217-259; tenets of faith, 209-212. See also entries under individual Boards of the Convention, and specific individual subjects.
 National Baptist Convention of America, Unincorporated, 102-104
 National Council of Churches, 155, 159, 174
 National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls, 141-146
 National Training School for Women and Girls, 106, 141-44
 Negro, Christian, 23-24, 27, 41, 45, 46, 59-62, 96
Negro Baptist History, U.S.A., 72, 119, 191, 209, 212
Negro Baptists and Foreign Missions, 154, 182-183
Negro's Declaration of Intention, 192, 213-216
 New Jersey
 Bordentown Baptist Church, 88
 Newton Theological Seminary, 133
 New York
 Abyssinian Baptist Church, New York City, 47, 48
 Ebenezer Baptist Church, New York City, 50
 First Baptist Church, Gold Street, New York City, 49, 50
 Nkrumah, Kwame, 163

 Normal and Theological Institute of Louisville, 88, 141
 Northwestern Convention, 84
Notes and Questions for the Oral Instruction of Colored People With Appropriate Texts and Hymns, 66
 Nutt, David, 74-75

Odyssey, 34
 Olmstead, Frederick Law, 66
On Two Hemispheres: Bits From the Life Story of Lewis G. Jordan, 72-79
Our Daily Bread, 121, 122

 Palmer, Brother, 29-31, 35, 41
 Paul, Rev. Thomas, 48-52, 53
 Pennsylvania
 African Baptist Church, Philadelphia, 48, 52
People's Friend, The, 95
 Peques, Dr. A. W., 92
 Peters, Rev. Jesse, 32, 37, 41
 Powell, Adam Clayton, Sr., 50-51
 Powell, Adam Clayton, Jr., 50-51
Pre-School Age Materials, 121
 Presbyterians, 25
 Presley, Rev. and Mrs. J. H., 153
Primary Sunday School Lessons, 122
 Prohibition, 96
 Providence Baptist Association, 68, 83
 Puritanism, 15-17, 19

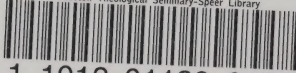
 Quakers, 24, 174

 Ranford, Rev. Ralph, 25
 Reconstruction Era, 71-78, 79, 89-90
 Red Circle Groups, 166
 Reeves, Miss Mary E., 76, 78
 Rhode Island
 First Baptist Church, Providence, 19
 Rice, Luther, 55
 Richland Theological Seminary, 138
 Richmond African Missionary Society, 54
 Richmond College, 65
 Richmond Foreign Missionary Society, 55
 Roger Williams University, 78, 95, 110, 111, 128, 138, 156

- Rome, ancient, 22
 Roosevelt University, 147
 Ryland, Rev. Robert, 65, 66
- Sanford, Joseph, 56
 Selma University, 120, 139-140
Senior Bible Quarterly, 122
 Sharpe, Henry, 35, 36
 Shaw University, 99, 132-138, 139-140
 Simmons, William J., 87-91, 94, 106, 135, 141, 142
 Simmons University, 88, 106, 141
 Smith, Lucy Wilmot, 106, 142
 Smothers, Rev, 77
 Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 24
 South Carolina
 Silver Bluff Baptist Church, 29-31, 32-33, 36-37, 57, 107, 190
 Southern Baptist Convention, 67, 85, 146, 152
 Southern States Exposition, 79
Spelman College, 138
Spirituals Triumphant, Old and New, 118
Star of Hope, 118, 121
 Stoics, 22
 Sumeria, ancient, 21
Sunday School Informer, 118, 121
 Sunday School Publishing Board, 72, 107, 110-112, 117-126, 131, 147, 165-166. **Library**, 192, 260-263
Sunday School Teacher, 93
 Sunshine Bands, 166
- TABS, 166
 Talladega College, 139
 Talley, Marshall, 154, 182-183
 Tardiff, Alexander, 87
 Teague, Rev. Collins, 53, 55-56
 Teague, Hillary, 56
 Tennessee Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, 111
 Texas
 New Hope Church, Waco, 95
 Thomas, Rev. Samuel, 24
 Thompson, Mrs. H. G., 124
 Tolbert, Hon. W. R., 155
- Townsend, Dr. A. M., 110-113, 117, 118-121, 123, 124, 125-126
 Townsend, Mrs. Willa A., 117, 118
 Tubman, William V. S., 156, 161-164
 Tupper, Henry Martin, 132-138
 Turner, Dr. Maynard P., 146
 Turner, Nat, 62-63
 Tuskegee Institute, 79
- Unfree Will, The*, 13
 Union of the New England Convention, 91
- Virginia
 Harrison Street Baptist Church, Petersburg, 45
 Portsmouth Baptist Church, 46, 50
 First Baptist Church, Richmond, 46
 First Baptist Church, Williamsburg, 45
 Virginia Union University, 99, 139, 169
- Washington, D. C.
 Nineteenth Street Church, 65
 Washington, Dr. Booker T., 79-82, 128-129, 143, 147
 Washington, Rev. Dr. D. C., 107, 120, 192, 260-263
Watchman-Examiner, 175, 184-186
 Waters Institute, 137
 Wayland Seminary, 138
 Western Colored Baptist Convention, 68-69, 83-84
 White Citizens' Councils, 192, 226-229
 Williams, Roger, 16-19, 190
 Willis, Joseph, 47-48
 Winkler, E. T., 66
 Women's Auxiliary, 105, 106, 142, 143, 145, 156, 165, 166
 Wood, Rev. Loren, 78
 Wood River Baptist Association, 68, 83
 Woods, Rev. Dr. R. C., 170
Worker, The, 121
 World Council of Churches, 174
 World Missionary Alliances, 155
- Young Matrons' Auxiliary, 166
 Young Women's Auxiliary, 166

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